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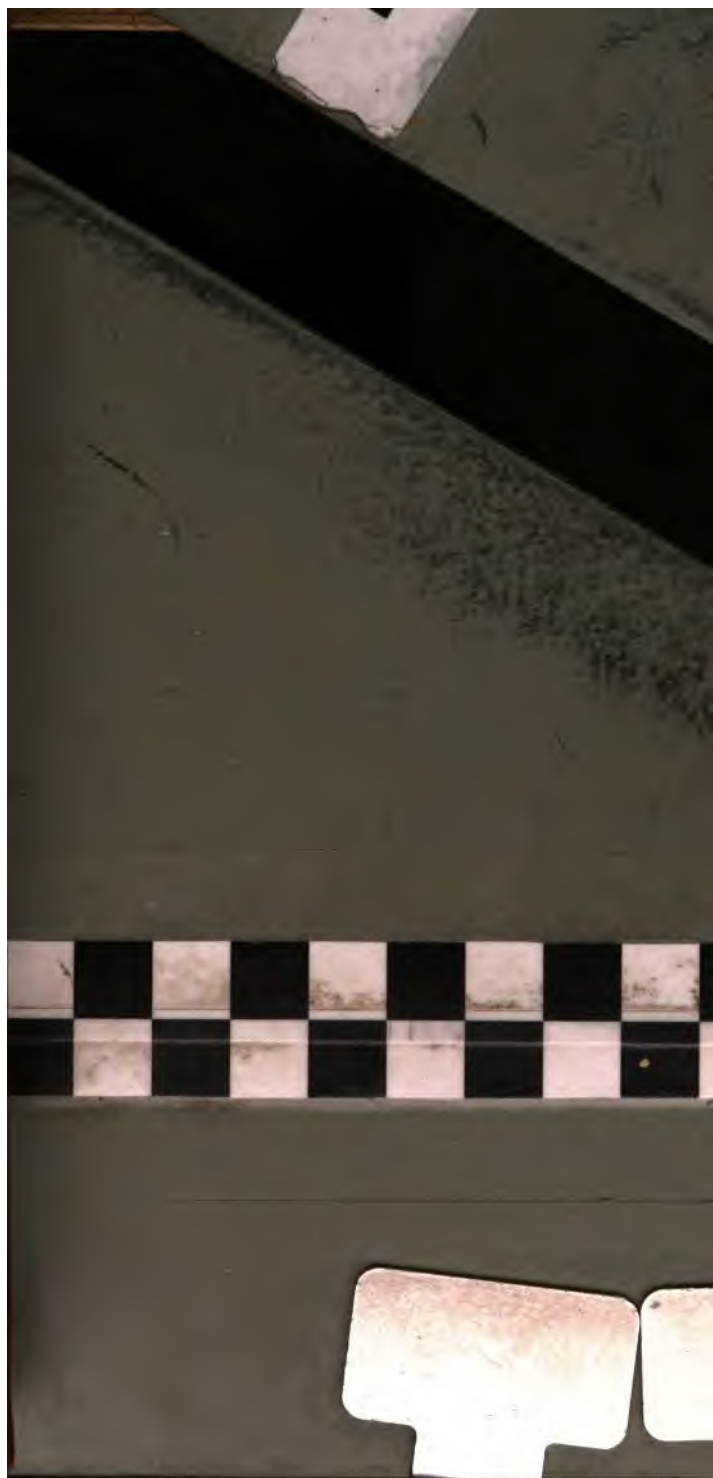
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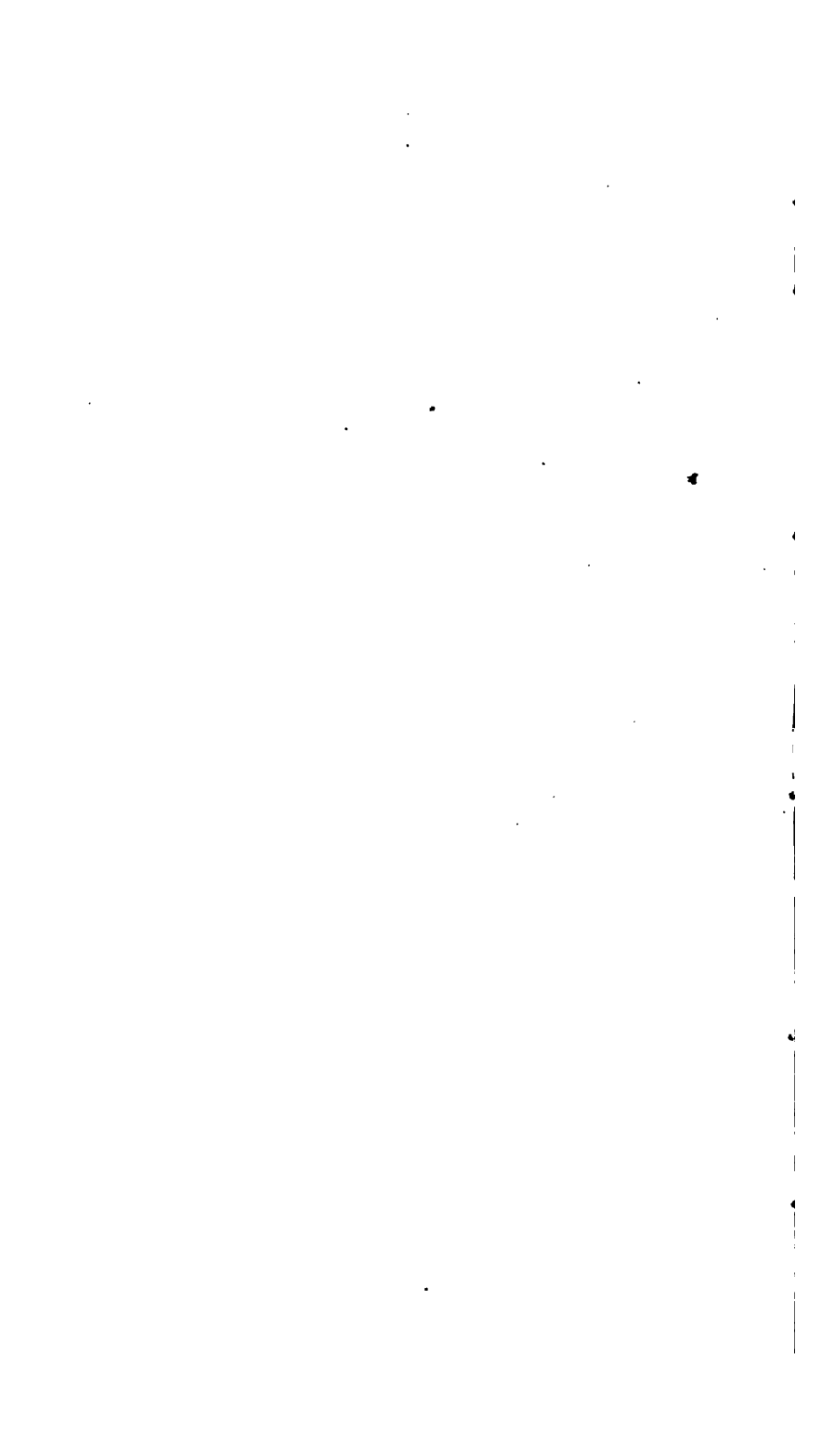
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LORD ROLDAN.

A ROMANCE.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Loosed to the world's wide range, enjoin'd no aim,
Prescribed no duty, and assign'd no name,
Nature's unbounded son, he stands alone,
His heart unbiass'd and his mind his own.
Strong as necessity, he starts away,
Climbs against wrongs, and brightens into day.

Savage.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LORD ROLDAN.

CHAPTER I.

"When I mount the creepie chair,
Wha will sit beside me there?
Gie me Rab—I'll seek nae mair."
BURNS.

On a small rose, or promontory, in the bosom of the bay of Glengarnock, on the western coast of Scotland, stand the ruins of a parish kirk. Some roofless houses are near; the burial-ground is filled with ancient gravestones, and the old bell, rung sometimes—and the peasants say mournfully—by the wind, is yet visible on the sole remaining gable. This decay happened through no falling off in devotion: there is still a surplus of piety in the district; but that carnal weed, stipend, failed to increase according to the wants of the pastoral incumbents, and Glengarnock, with its ancient name and traditions of a thousand years, was lost in the neighbouring parish of Drumdrousie. Though omitted in session records, and dropped out of county enactments, Glengarnock was not forgotten. There is a love which survives death, and upsets acts of parliament: the old families stood resolutely by the old name, and refused too to be buried in other earth than where their ancestors lay; nay, at the present moment, the rudest hind regards the old edifice as he passes it with reverence, and at stated times some of the graver people go with their whole household, and perform family worship within the ruined walls. Yet we must not ascribe all this to devotion: the peasant sobers down his mood as he passes the burial-ground after twilight, because he believes it to be haunted; and the old families persist in speaking of Glengarnock, and remembering its past glories, because it helps to humble the pride of the upstart portioners of Drumdrousie.

On the day—and it was a summer one—on which this story commences, the little kirk of Glengarnock wore another look: the roof of gray slate glittered in the sun; the doors

were thrown open, while the bell—borrowed at the reformation from the abbey of Dundrennan—intimated to the glens and hills that the Sabbath was come, and the hour of public devotion at hand. The place was lonesome, but not without beauty; the hills which hemmed it in were green to the summits; the coming tide was filling all the bay; the seabirds were darting on their prey amid the long lines of southing foam; two or three vessels of war or merchandise lay with their sails reefed at a distance; one or two stranded and half-buried skiffs intimated that the roadstead was dangerous; while the rooks on the firs sat so still, and the birds in the bushes sang so sweet, as showed they were conscious of safety on the sacred day.

The people, too, shared in the calm gladness of the scene: each glen and hill had sent forth its dounce and well-dressed inhabitants; they filled half the little burial-ground, and leaned over the low wall, looking towards the west, seemingly expecting the coming of some one. They could not be waiting for the preacher, for he had already arrived, and was putting on his short Geneva cloak, and arranging the notes of his sermon in the house of one of his elders. The sex and the business of the person expected were thus announced by one of the eager gazers, Nickie Neevison by name. "Ay! ye may look till the een loup out of your heads—she's no the quean I take her to be if she come here to be made into a parish wonder." One or two silently assented to this opinion, and walked into the kirk: those who remained were soon rewarded for their patience.

A whisper arose among the gazers, and all eyes were directed to a young woman, who, screened till now by a succession of broomy knolls, came towards the kirk: she came indeed, but she faltered, nay, trembled much, and seemed once or twice about to turn back—she was on an adventure that appeared beyond her strength. When she came near all eyes were cast down, or somewhat averted, and a murmur of pity arose among such as nature had not steeled against compassion. She was not more than eighteen years old; her dress, a gray linsey-woolsey, indicated that she belonged to the humbler classes; but her beauty was worthy of any condition, nor was it hurt, but perhaps heightened, by a certain remissness in her apparel, and a trouble in her looks, over which the lily and the rose seemed chasing one another. Her hair, at that time worn very long, was of a glistering brown; and as it escaped in handfuls from beneath her head-gear, she raised fingers, long, white, and round, to shed it back and replace it; while her mantle, one of those soft and delicate "whites" for which the district, says an historian, was famed in "uncouth realms," hung a little awry, revealing a handsome form, such as artists dream of oftener than they delineate. As she passed into

the kirk she hung her head slightly, looked neither to the right nor to the left, while her large bright hazel eyes had each a teardrop ready to run trembling down her cheeks, over which others, and hot ones too, had lately passed. "I told ye sae, now!" exclaimed Nickie Neevison; "Madam's come, and she queens it rarely! But I trow Andrew Yorstoun will pull down her pride for her."

Few of those who filled the burial-ground seemed disposed to speak as harshly as Nickie Neevison: the elder people sighed and shook their heads—they had daughters of their own, and fear made them charitable; while some of the younger and more outspoken disguised their feelings less. One having observed that at any rate Mary Morison had got a fine day to show her folly in, was rebuked by a second. "It's sure," said this new authority, "to be a bonnie day, and bring all the parish out, when a modest young thing maun mount and be rebuked: had she been some light-headed haluket hizzie, ye would have had a tearing wind and a drenching rain, so that naebody but the doucest could have witnessed her suffering. I am sorry for the young laird of Howeboddom: he wooed lang and pled sair, but what maun be will be, there's nae gainsaying of that."—"It's just the way of a' weel faured lasses," said a third; "they slight the kind and the deserving, and rin a queer road with the rich and the deceitful, and end on the repentance-stool."—"I think," exclaimed a fourth, "that three parishes are emptied upon us this blessed day; look to the sea, behold a batch of sailor lads coming hither with all speed of oars; yet they have erred in every latitude! There's a swarm of thrashers and ploughmen hastening down the glen, as if they never saw a sonsie lass that had tint her snood before; and waur than a', yonder's a score of shepherds from the inland hills: I feel already the smell of tar and braksha. I can bide the sight no longer." The bell, as these words were uttered, ceased ringing, and all the people entered the kirk and took their seats.

Mary Morison, for that was the name of the young woman respecting whom all these words have been spoken—Mary Morison had already taken her seat. Now the seat occupied by this rural beauty was, we grieve to say it, no other than the seat of shame—a bad eminence, known by the familiar name of "the Creepie" among rustics, and described in the sessional records as "the repentance-stool." A witty Scottish bard stigmatized it a hundred years ago in a satire called "Rome's Legacy to the Kirk of Scotland," where he exhibits a male transgressor enduring penance in a way at once witty and indecorous. "The Creepie" of Glengarnock kirk projected into the body of the building from a loft or balcony, and being of open Gothic work, the culprit, whether male or female, was visible, from head to

foot, to all the congregation. The more opulent or more prudent of the transgressors of the female sex usually baffled public curiosity by dropping a large thick veil over head and shoulders; while male sinners, more philosophical or more anxious to make full atonement, stood exposed and bare, and sometimes, it is said, excited by their deportment a dangerous pity in soft bosoms. Poor Mary Morison was not one of the opulent; she had no veil to drop over charms which had already ruined her own peace: she took her place not without a visible shudder, but that soon subsided, and left her with looks as pale and fixed as marble, and a brow where internal strife seemed to have given way to a calm and resolute composure, which enabled her to endure the coming rebuke of the church, the more since it could not convey a sharper pang to her heart than what she had already suffered.

All eyes were turned upon her save those of the preacher, who had other follies, if not failings, to deal with, before he touched on the frailty of Mary Morison. He preached a sermon which was a curiosity in its kind; it was directed against those enormities in female attire which in Old Testament times awoke the indignation of one of God's prophets, and in latter days induced a venerable divine to declare, that a handsome, well-dressed, rosy woman was a baited hook for Satan. He had all the examples of female vanity by heart: he was aware that one of the bards of the reformation had taken up a rhyming testimony against the flowing trains of the court-ladies; and that Knox had thundered against the increasing influence of woman, and the unloveliness of love-locks. Now the parish of this zealous pastor was very poor, and, moreover, lay much out of the way of temptation: there were but three silk gowns in the district, and Lady Roldan was reported to have one of velvet, which descended to her as an heir-loom: yet out of homely materials the ingenious preacher contrived to raise up a strong rampart against modesty and virtue. He condemned all slippers that were low at the instep; all gowns, whether silk or linsey-woolsey, which showed too much below, and concealed too little above; all locks which were curled, by nature or otherwise, and polished busks and gimp bodice, he regarded as matters calculated to make ladies lose their balance, and become, like the young woman before them, candidates for the repentance-stool. "Some of us," muttered Nickie Neevison, "are safe enough in any thing; I shall wear silk when I can get it, and satin too—were it but to vex him the mair!"

Not a few of the hearers grew weary of a sermon which it had been their fortune to hear delivered, as one troubled with a particular memory declared, for the seven-and-twentieth time in six-and-twenty years. One began to think of

his standing corn, and how it was prospering in the sunshine: another entered into a calculation of the lambs on his hills, and failed not to express a hope that they would be worth three half-crowns apiece by the lamb fair of Lockerby; a third—he was a miser—read the various sums written in golden letters on the wall, “mortified,” as it is called, for the good of the poor of the parish, by charitable wanderers who thought of their native place in a far land; a fourth—he knew a fat haggis was ready to a popple at home—eyed the sunbeam as it crept, snail-like, along the wall, and thought that Sol’s westerling wheels required greasing; while a fifth fixed his eyes on the grotesque figures which, like those carved on Gothic corbels, supported on their backs the burden of the seat which held Mary Morison.

This seat was in truth a rare piece of workmanship, and once occupied a place among other fantastic sculpturings in the old Abbey of Sweetheart: the architect of the kirk stole what he could not otherwise produce, and caused a group which had served antichrist to do duty for the reformed church. This required tact, and it was not wanting. No sooner had the artist given the finishing touch to the new repentance-stool, than a hue and cry arose that Rome had a hand in the undertaking, and that one of her relics was polluting the reformed kirk of Glengarnock. A stern divine of the district went and looked at and handled the group, then summoned the artist, and demanded an explanation. “Here,” said he, “is carved a fair, plump woman: a figure with an evil mien seems to have hold of her; but how, or where, I cannot well say, seeing that part of her is covered with a mantle: while here are two spirits—black or white—according as we may fancy, for they are of wood, which appear to be bestowing nurture and admonition on the woman in a manner more picturesque than polite.”

“You have described it truly,” replied the artist; “it is not what it seems—it is symbolical. The woman plump and fair is her of Babylon; the figure of evil mien which holds her up in secret is Superstition; and the two bright shapes—they are bright, for their faces and hands are gilt—are Knox and Calvin, scourging the abominations of Rome.” The artist prevailed; but had the original meaning of the group been given, this relic of popery had found its way to the fire.

From these and other reveries the hearers were suddenly recalled: the preacher, whose voice had hitherto maintained a sort of swelling sound of a lulling influence, dropped all at once from a high cold strain of laborious invective, and in a tone very low, very distinct, and very moving, took up the subject matter of transgression. Succeeding events caused every word he uttered to be recalled and remember-

ed : nor were they many, nor elegant, nor weighty ; but time, place, and circumstances hallow ordinary things, and give a sublimity to expressions in themselves simple.

"Young woman," said the preacher, "I will not name you, for your name was given for high things ; and for all that has happened it will be pronounced with honour in the land when these gray hairs of mine—ay, and these bright ones of thine—are mingled in the dust. I shall not, therefore, couple it with the sin which has brought you before the servant of the Lord this day. I leave it as a wad or pledge to be redeemed by virtue. Neither shall I name the sin, nor descant upon it as some of my brethren are apt to do : it is a word that may not be spoken, and the evil eminence which you now occupy sufficiently indicates it. But, oh ! woman, this is a sad descent from the bright station which till now you have held ; my eyes were upon you from the time you were an hour old, for I watch over my people. I signed the sign of the Redeemer's cross on thy little brow—even then it was bright ;—I saw you grow up the fairest of the flowers in this little garden of my master's, and not more fair than bright ; for in wit and quickness of mind, who is there that has excelled thee ? Your father died—nay, be not troubled at that—he was spared this humiliation of his hopes and home ;—your mother died—I am glad you are more composed when I name her—for, oh ! how grateful you ought to be to God that she is in the kirkyard and not in the congregation."

The preacher paused for a little space ; the people looked alternately at the pulpit and the repentance-stool ; nor were they unmoved to see tears in both places. He thus continued his admonition : "Thou wert thus left fatherless and motherless, and the voice of God seemed to say to all, 'She is as a lamb on the mountains : see how desolate she is !—it is the duty of all who love virtue and loveliness to watch over her—she is an orphan, and has no father to take her part,—no brother to be bold in a sister's cause.' But there came one who saw thou wert lovely, and desired thee ; who saw that thou wert unprotected, and that he might spread a snare for thee in safety ;—one who had dallied with the plumed and painted madams of Edinburgh and London, and saw thou wert vain as, alas ! beauty ever is ; and with his wit, his wealth, his title, and his talents, set about, with all the eloquence of a bright spirit, and the feelings of a dark one, to insnare and undo thee. How he succeeded, let thy present seat testify. He is not one of us : on him the light of the reformation has in vain been shed, and he belongs to a fold of which the keeper believes himself infallible, and a god. Were he one of us, he should this day have heard truths such as none of his gay comrades dare tell him : words—were he not as deaf as is the adder, of which he is

a type—more piercing than arrows, and hotter than the cinders of Tophet."

As the preacher uttered these words, the sound of a horse's hoofs was heard at the entrance of the kirk, and the jingling of the chains and spurs of a rider, as he dismounted. In a moment a handsome, nay, noble-looking young man, advanced up the central aisle; he threw his cloak from about him, folded his arms, and, pausing where the seats commenced, said, in a voice which had a touch of scorn in it, "I am here; and not so deaf as is the adder. What have you to say to me?"

The first feeling of the people was astonishment and horror at this intrusion; the next was to seize him, and thrust him with ignominy out of the church into which he pushed himself, as it seemed, to browbeat and insult. The preacher saw this at a glance, and exclaimed with a voice which even made the intruder start,—"Touch him not, my people, I command you: he comes not unsent—scarcely unexpected; conduct him to a seat." This was addressed to the elders—one of whom, an old sedate man, still remembered in the vale by the name of King Corrie, from a certain sovereignty of manner which he assumed among the hinds and mechanics, advanced up to this unwelcome visitor; opened the door which led to the seat of shame, and motioned him to ascend, with a look in which there was as much sarcastic sourness as charity. When the door jarred, Mary Morrison, who, amid all this scene, had displayed a wondrous composure, seemed ready to sink where she stood: she looked below, and she looked to the pulpit; shed back her ringlets with her hand from her moistened face, and, by a sudden effort, regained her self-command—an effort equal to her whole firmness of mind and nerve. The finger of the preacher, and the hand of another of the elders, provided a seat in which this intruder would not be considered as a culprit; but he refused to be seated, and still with folded arms repeated his first interrogatory, "I am here; what have you to say to me?"

Andrew Yorstoun eyed him for a moment, and leaning over his arms on the pulpit, said, "I have nothing now to say to thee, Lord Roldan; because I see from thy behaviour here thou art beyond reproof, and unworthy of having the rebuke of the church breathed against thee. I see in thee the last of a long line of valiant men, who often warred worthily for their country, and of all thy house there is but one whom I dare call coward, and he stands before me. Nay, put not thy hand to thy side; I know thou hast a sword, and canst use it with skill; but brute boldness is not bravery, any more than this pitiful bravado of thine to-day is courage. Who, of all thy noble ancestors—and some of them were not scrupulous—would have wrought such wreck of inno-

cence and beauty, and then ventured into the house of God to glory in the wickedness! Not one! Not even Lord Gerald, the most sinful of all thy line—he who spilt the blood of saints like water upon the mountains, and smote God's servant with his steel gauntlet till the blood burst over his Bible—even he, whom profane men called Hell-let-loose, were he let loose from hell to-day, would blush for thee, and say thou hadst disgraced him."

"Of me say what thou wilt," said Lord Roldan, not unmoved. "But, old man, say nothing of my sires save what a son may hear. Go on."

"I think the minister," whispered King Corrie to a brother elder, "is the braver man of the twa. What a capital hand he would have been in the days of the Covenant, when men took to the hillside with broadsword and Bible, and found use for them baith."

"Whisht, John," whispered the other; "and hearken to the minister. Ye'll see him just now send this young whelp of Babylon howling home to his mother as if the fiend had spilt a ladleful of melted brimstone on him. There it comes!"

"Then of thee alone will I speak, and speak to thy understanding," said the preacher; "and, godless as thou art, think not to remain unmoved. Close your Bibles, my people, and shut your ears, if such seems good, for your minister is to speak of carnal and worldly things." As he said this, he descended from the pulpit, advanced to Lord Roldan, took him by the hand, led him to a window, and said, "Look out there, and say what you see. You see the green hills and dales of Glengarnock: are they not beautiful? They once called the lords of Roldan master; ay! and hills and dales, more fertile still, beyond them, told the same tale. They are passed and gone from thy house, and strange names have sprung up in the land, and hold rule, and administer the law. Was it the strong hand and the sharp sword, think ye, which achieved this? No! For who was there in all the north border more skilful to lead or more brave in fight, than were the men of thy name? Their lands and their rule passed from them, not from want of strength, but through lack of virtue: they sinned, and God bereaved them of their wisdom, and they became blind, and took the road to ruin, and called it the road to honour. See! there is a streak of sunshine even now on the tower of thy fathers! I accept that as a symbol that hope has not yet forsaken thy house. It is in thy power to redeem thy name from ruin, and replace it among the worthies of the land: it may be done by one noble act: must I say what that act is?"

"I am no reader of riddles," said Lord Roldan, "nor solver of mysteries—speak, and speak plainly."

"I mean so, and not otherwise," said the preacher. "Hast thou the courage to look around thee? There is a

woman among my people whom thou hast grievously wronged: go, take her by the hand, and bid the church give her with its blessing to thy bosom."

Lord Roldan stepped some space back; his eyes lightened more with amazement than anger. "Sir Preacher," he answered, "you are not so ignorant of both your Bible and the world, as not to know that I cannot unite with my own menial without degrading my rank, and stepping voluntarily down from a station ten centuries old."

"I know," replied the other, "that we all are God's creatures, made in his own likeness; and fair, and beautiful, and brave, and wise, and imaginative, according to his good pleasure in bestowing his gifts. These are personal merits, and cannot be made heritable like the vales of Glengarnock. I have nowhere learned from inspired writ that God has forbid love and marriage between a young and well-mated pair—because, forsooth, the one was by accident a lord, and the other by accident a simple maiden. Go to—find me a worthier reason, for all are equal in the sight of Heaven."

"It is enough," replied Lord Roldan, colouring; "and must satisfy all who take upon themselves the risk of inquiring into my private affairs, that I wed no one below my degree. Are you answered?"

"No, man of folly and pride, I am not answered," said the preacher. "I laugh at such fantastic reasons, and you must find better when you answer for your conduct at the bar of the Most High. I am not answered; and I tell thee, in the presence of God, and in the hearing of man, that the creature whom thou hast ensnared and deserted might be lady to the best that ever ruled in thy house, and therefore thou art no more worthy of her than the reptile is of the damask rose into whose bosom it has crawled."

The hot and impetuous youth seemed inclined at first to offer personal violence to his stern and inflexible monitor: but, if the intention existed at all, it was but for a moment. He drew himself haughtily up, bowed slightly to the preacher and to the people, and withdrew as suddenly as he came, leaving the whole audience amazed at his audacity.

"It is weel for himself that he is gone," groaned an old woman. "Had he tarried a moment longer, all the Bibles in the kirk would have been thrown at his presumptuous face. He is a handsome youth; but the devil takes some pains in the fashioning of his snares."

While this was passing, the precentor lifted up his voice and began to sing the eighth psalm. All the people joined; first, because they were accustomed to follow when he led; secondly, the psalm itself was a great favourite from its poetic beauty; and, thirdly, not a few felt that the scene was indecorous, though they had a full belief that their pastor would triumph, nay, perhaps prevail on the young

lord to wed one more than worthy of him. At a sign from the preacher the singing ceased; at a second sign, the seat of shame was vacated, never to be occupied again, for on the morrow it was missed in its place, and all the women cried out, "The church of Rome has claimed its own;" and at a third sign, all the people rose, received the blessing of their pastor, and left the church to seek their own glens and respective habitations.

From the talk among the people on their way home, enough was said respecting the leading personages in this little drama to enable me to introduce them to the reader at full length. The Lord Roldan, of whose wild feelings and unsober deportment some display has already been made, belonged to a long line of nobles, whose fame, reaching back beyond the days of the Bruce and the Wallace, suffered a sad eclipse by the change of religion, and of kings—never to speak of a rebellion or two in which the lords of Roldan, estate as well as persons, were engaged. They had maintained a sort of stormy independence against the overshadowing houses of Douglas and Maxwell—nay, they had once or twice raised their banner against their own liege lords, and submitted not without blows. A long train of misfortune crushed their strength and curtailed their patrimony; they unfortunately took the unlucky side in all national disputes, from the day that Knox contended for the light at St. Andrew's down to the day on which the field of Culloden was stricken. The reformed saints of the congregation pronounced that one of their best estates was church property, and gave it to one who eschewed evil according to the tenets of Calvin: they lost the east wing of their domains by siding with Charles Stuart against Oliver Cromwell, and thought to win it back by joining in one of the many plots hatched under the second Charles; but instead of that the west wing went. The main body of their property was invaded, and the title endangered by the share which they took in the rising of the Earl of Mar, and they were only saved from risking the remainder in the year 1745 by the subtle boldness of Roger Morison, grandfather of the unfortunate Mary of our tale; who, under pretence of selecting arms, enticed the Lord Roldan of the day into the dungeon of his own castle, and held him under custody till Prince Charles and his men were passed and gone.

This piece of service, which might have procured Roger Morison a halter instead of thanks had the rebellion succeeded, was rewarded after the fatal day of Culloden by a benefaction to him and his heirs for ever of the Elfin-glen, a piece of ground more poetic than productive, and the house that stood in it and which he then occupied. From that till the present time the story of the Roldans may be briefly told: they hunted, they travelled, they gamed, and they

squandered, till the estate was deeply sunk by the load of its debt, and all that remained to the family was a massive castle, too large by one half for a household such as theirs, and a rental of some three thousand a year: while all that remained of the family was the dowager Lady Roldan, a pious person, and, as the peasants said, as proud as Lucifer: Lord Roldan, her eldest son, whom we have already introduced, and Lord Thomas, her second son, now wandering abroad, banished, it is said, by the pride of his mother, because of his attachment to a young lady of an heretical house. Of Mary Morison, who for the present must be our heroine, it is only necessary to say, that she was left an orphan to inherit the Elfin-glen when some fifteen years old, and that faith in promises and belief in vows had brought her into that state of humiliation which we have endeavoured to draw.

When the congregation of Glengarnock separated, a large portion sought their way to the glens which might be seen at a distance, each with its own particular stream and thin blue smoke ascending above the farmsteads and cothouses, bosomed or buried in the sheltered nooks and antique woods. The people were divided into some half-dozen groups, and each group discussed the conduct of the young Lord Roldan, the deportment of Mary Morison, and the eloquence of the preacher. The opinions were very various.

"It's a fine thing," cried Nickie Neevison, whose tongue was ever in the van—"it's a fine thing, I say, to be weel-favoured. Madam there, where she takes the road before us, may thank her curling locks and bright een for the escape she made: my certie! the minister advertised her talents and looks: he was harder on us decent and faultless folk, for a feather by ordinary in our head, and a founce mair than common in our gown, than he was on madam for doing what he would na name, poor bird-mouthed body, as if we didnae all know what he meant. Such gentleness is a premium to folly: I'll answer for naeboddy after this."

A milder voice took up the subject. "We must consider," said Jeanie Rabson, "that beauty is a temptation, and speak mildly of the errors of loveliness. See how busy the bees and wasps are about this new-blossomed and scented flower, while not one of them will touch that common weed."

"Ye speak touchingly, my dear sister," said James Rabson, the laird of Howeboddum; "and when did ye speak otherwise? But will none of you accompany yonder unhappy thing hame!—she has dreed a terrible weird this day, and may need in her lonesome home some who can both think and speak."

"And act too, laird," said Nickie Neevison. "But, 'las anee! I cannot go: I lack experience in her needs, ye ken; but she can get Marion Johnstone, a sure hand—mony's the

ill-faured face which she has introduced to daylight; and, better still, there's Girzie Haffie, whom folk call Nipneck—she nippit the neck of Sarah Steenson's bairn—and what she did ance she may do again. But what mad rider's this!—if here is nae the young lord himself! If he has heard what I said of him to-day, he'll never stop his horse and talk wi' me as I come hame frae the market again."

Ere she had done speaking, Lord Roldan was among them: he reined in his horse, and touching him gently with the spur, and curbing him sharply with a hard-bitted bridle, restrained him in his paces. He had, perhaps, some doubts of the propriety of his behaviour in the church, and took this opportunity of learning the public opinion. He was not kept long in the dark.

"I wish ye joy of your judgment, Lord Roldan," said Nickie Neevison. "Ye have made a grand exhibition of yourself! There's naught like you in all Will Shakspeare—na, nor Davie Lindsay neither. And on the Lord's day, too!—but the better day the better deed."

"So, then, Miss Neevison," said his lordship, with a smile, "you approve of my exhibition, as you call it, and think it dramatic!"

"Truly do I, my lord," said the ready Nickie. "All the acts of your house are naught compared wi't. Let me see—Lord Robert threw away the mains of Plumdamas at a cast of the dice; Lord William sold the estate of Cummercraft, and threw all the gold it brought into the lap of his fause leman, Effie Macnab; Lord Roland, your ain grand-sire, threw away land and rent for the sake of the devil, the pope, and the pretender. Na, na, the best of them canna hold a candle to you; they could but build the wall, your lordship has laid on the capestane!"

The young lord, so far from looking offended with this freedom, seemed to enjoy it much; he smiled as Nickie proceeded with the muster-roll of follies in his family, and laughed outright when she gave the precedence to his own misdeeds. This did not fail to make an impression on his audience, who, branching off, one by one, from the main way to their various homesteads, could not help glancing back to get another glimpse of him. His look, and shape, and air merited all this: he sat his horse with a grace which intimated the saddle to be his familiar seat; his jacket of sea-green velvet, with gold buttons; his short cloak, lined with the richest silk, and fastened at the neck with clasps studded with Solway pearls; the elegant unity of his form; the proud expression of his large dark eyes; the haughty curl of his lip; and an air of nobleness which, like sap in the tree, was diffused over the whole man; together with his youth—bespoke favour, and won respect. Having made this favourable impression, he suddenly touched his hat,

put spurs to his horse, and galloped forward, and disappeared in the groves which sheltered, but did not conceal, the castle of his fathers.

"Weel, they are queer deevils, these gentles, after a'," said a shepherd from the neighbouring hills—"the young lord smiled, and yet bit his lips till the blood sprang; he looked gladsome, and yet he spurred and curbed his poor horse without reason; and did ye no see, when he laughed outright, how he gave my lady's spaniel such a whack wi' his whip as sent it limping on three legs for the next half-mile?"

On the young laird of Howeboddom and his sister, the pleasant words and agreeable person of Lord Roldan made no impression: they shrunk from him, and regarded him with looks such as we cast on some shining reptile brought from climes nearer the sun, and exhibited in our cold isle, where a viper or a snake is almost a wonder. On reaching their own threshold, they paused and hesitated: "Shall I go in, James?" said Jeanie.

"As you like," said the brother. She, however, entered not; but, looking earnestly in his face, turned round, and said, more with her eyes than with her lips, "Shall I go to her, James?"

"Do so, Jeanie—my ain Jeanie," he replied, and hurried into the house. To what these words led must be reserved for the second chapter of this "owne true tale."

CHAPTER II

"The kimmer keekit in his loof;
Quo' she, wha lives will see the proof,
This waly boy will be nae coof."

BURNS.

THE Elfin-glen, to which we must now request the company of our readers, was then in its summer beauty: it was, in truth, a ravine rather than a vale; and was formed by a little stream, which, in dry seasons, trickled rather than flowed; but in winter, when rains fell heavy on the hills, came down red and foaming, letting its moorland tongue be heard audibly in the land. The continual running of many centuries—armed, too, with rocks and stones when in flood—had enabled the Elfin burn to eat its way for a hundred feet and more down into the solid but soft sandstone: the eddying of the water, as it tried to force its way, had formed a channel sufficiently winding and fantastic; while here and there a large round whinstone, refusing to move further

till admonished, perhaps, by a thunder-plump, allowed itself to be whirled round and round, till an immense circular basin was formed, filled with the purest water and the finest trout ; in the centre of which it lay smooth and polished, contrasting curiously with the rock around.

The first leap of the burn might be some fotty feet, which it performed out of a bed of heather ; the second was about the same height, but, pausing in its way, shaped out many little chambers and caverned galleries in the sides, till performing its third and last leap within a few hundred yards of the Elfin-cottage, it ran the rest of its journey smooth, and placid, and pure ; no more resembling the little turbulent brook which we have described, than a maiden sleeping on a bed of lilies resembles a tragic queen in a drama, with her hair floating, her eyes flashing, and her hands on the dagger or the bowl.

The little glen was in its summer livery : the hazels were green, the honeysuckles abundant ; at the bell of each fox-glove a wild bee hung ; while the stream, as clear as the sky which overhung it, was scarcely heard as it lingered among the pebbles of its bed and the clustering bushes of its banks. But among none of its flowers did the feet of Jeanie Rabson linger, nor on any of its beauties did her eyes for a moment dwell : with nimble feet, and an eye which challenged every object, and an ear that questioned every sound, she hastened to the Elfin-cottage.

Jeanie and Mary had been school comrades, and were endeared to each other by ties of many kinds and colours. The former had the advantage in years, and in a certain sedateness of judgment ; but in all other matters the latter was superior. To Mary no task was ever hard, and no difficulty difficult : at school she mastered all her lessons with such rapidity, that she found leisure to aid Jeanie, and thus kept her close to her in the classes, nor did she ever seem to labour : hers was so happy a readiness that she had always leisure for her little garden, into which she introduced many curious and rare flowers ; always time for play among the rocks and trees of the glen when her companions desired it. But better than all in the sight of her friends, she never presumed on the merit of her natural endowments ; neither, as she grew up, did she give herself those airs which inform us that the exhibiter is not only aware of her beauty, but is resolved to have it acknowledged.

All these and other qualities were present to the mind of Jeanie as she approached the little lonesome dwelling of her friend. The door was open ; a fire glimmered on the hearth ; a table stood on the floor, and upon it were placed some handfuls of berries gathered from the glen, together with new milk and butter. All was clean, neat, and even elegant ; but no living creature was to be seen, save the cat

which purred on the hearth, and the thrush which sung at the window.

Jeanie listened: she heard no one breathing; she looked at the bed, it was smooth and fair; she cried "Mary," with a voice at first low, and then louder, but no one answered. She went hastily out, looked into a small plot of ground, fenced on one side by the perpendicular rock, and on the other by the Elfin burn, but Mary was not there: two hives of bees were at work; and the red rose and sweet-william afforded them food, except when they chose to seek the heather-bell at the top of the glen, or the honeysuckle in its bosom. She glanced at the low rustic seat in which she had often sat with Mary, plating garlands of wild flowers, and singing songs such as the lads of the district wrote: she looked at the sunward bank of mingled thyme and lilies, where they sometimes sat together listening to the song of the linnet or the thrush, or the laverock high in the air; or, scarcely less melodious—the music of the stream glittering and gliding by. No one was there. "Then she is in the Elfin-cave," Jeanie muttered to herself; and hastening along the narrow margin of the burn, she sought and soon reached this romantic nook.

The Elfin-cave was a natural chamber in the solid rock; but man had lent his helping hand, and fashioned a very handsome room, or rather gallery, on the sides of which were seats and tables; nay, a rude couch had been shaped, and tradition readily added that it was once the retreat of a lord of Roldan, who desired to do penance for some offence, real or imaginary, and becoming an anchorite, did good far and near, and even wrought miracles. As one of those miracles was the cure of the moor-ill among the cattle of the neighbouring uplands, we may at least allow him the merit of some medical skill.

The cavern was roomy; the entrance low and narrow, cut so for protection, no doubt, in times of feud or invasion, for the approach was very intricate, admitting but one at a time, while it was fully commanded from the interior, so that those who approached were completely at the mercy of those within. A pure spring welled up inside, a spring never frozen by winter's cold nor diminished by summer's heat; and, that naught might be wanting to render this place of refuge secure, the country traditions gave it an underground connexion with the castle of Roldan—or the remains of the ancient wilderness which still fringed the vale where the castle stood—but with which of those places the Elfin-cave communicated, rumour refused to decide.

When Jeanie entered the cave, she heard a voice soft and low, as of one praying rather than speaking: she rejoiced at this, for she knew it was Mary; and, advancing slowly, found her kneeling on the floor. Her hair was untied, and

flowing out like a stream around, while her forehead was touching the cold rough stone. What confession she made, or what was the nature of the covenant which she entered into with her own heart, was never known, unless it might be guessed from her after course of life. She rose when she had done, and gazing on her friend, said sharply, "Why come ye here? Is it to look upon the fallen, and the trampled on, and betrayed—is it to hearken me in the cleansing of my soul, that ye may tell the world that Mary Morison has made vows which she will not, cannot keep?—But no, no," she continued, in a choking tone, "Jeanie Rabson cannot do that—no, not if an angel bade her; her heart is too good and too pure."

Jeanie took her in her arms, both from fear that she might fall and from love to her. "Mary," she said, as she placed her on a bench of stone, and sat down beside her, "Mary, ye ken I never had muckle to say, but I winna forsake ye; ay! and there's another that I winna name, wha thinks as I think, and will do as I do."

It was not the words, though they were of good cheer and sincere ones, which restored the composure and firmness to Mary's mind; it was the solemn covenant which she had made with her Creator, and which she looked less to for respect on earth than she hoped happiness from hereafter. She turned her face to her friend, and said, "Jeanie, the sore trial is over; to look the congregation of the Lord in the face was what I greatly dreaded; I prayed for strength and for composure, and though both were not wholly granted, yet more than I merited was given. But oh! to think that he should come, like a raven to a dove-cot, to triumph in my shame, and to insult God's minister at his altar. I tell ye, Jeanie—but what are ye going to say? I see ye have something to tell me."

"I was just going to say," replied the other, "that I know not what Lord Roldan came for; he thought muckle about ye, weel I wot, else he wouldna been there; but what his real errand was lies atween God and his own conscience. He was gaye roughly handled, at ony rate; and I wish he had been mildly dealt with, for wha kens what he wanted to do?"

"Speak plainer, Jeanie Rabson, speak plainer. I can endure to hear the worst," said Mary, though a flush, which restored the bloom to her cheek and the brightness to her eye, intimated that a vision, not of darkness but of light, was passing before her.

"To speak plain, then," said Jeanie, "I canna see what could have brought him, save to stand before God and man and say that Mary Morison was his wedded wife—was Lady Roldan. And I can tell ye mair; mony a ane thought wi' the minister, that a better or a bonnier never sat in the

halls of Roldan. But, gude guide me! what ails ye now? Ye were rosie enough no half a minute syne."

The allusion which had been made was too much for Mary; she fainted where she sat; and though Jeanie fanned her bosom, and applied water from the spring to her temples and brow, she was so long in returning to life that she seemed gone for ever. "Oh! that I had some one here," Jeanie audibly prayed, "that could but help me to the cavern-mouth with this poor sufferer—ae mouthful of the sunny air of heaven wad bring back the breath that, if not departed, is departing. Oh! is there no ane of all the Sabbath-breakers and idlers can come here and do but ae good deed in their life!"

It seemed as if her prayer was about to be answered; she was startled with the sound, not from the entrance, but from the very bowels of the rock, of some one approaching.

"There's nae road that way to upper air," muttered Jeanie; "but whether of the world above or of the world below, I shall be thankful for its help."

"I am of both worlds," said a female voice from the inmost recesses of the cavern, and at the same moment the well-known figure of Nanse Halberson was presented to the dubious looks of Jeanie. "Ah, Jean Rabson, is this you! I did not think any one would have been before me in a matter of this kind. I jaloused Mary would be here, and so I came rather a roundabout road that I might not disturb her. But she will be out of her faint soon, and then we can make up our minds to the whole matter. That's my bonnie woman, move the other hand too. That will do finely. She begins to open her eyes. I wish we had her out of this wild place; for, though fit enough to fley folk in—I think, Jean, my coming scared ye—it's no just fit for a lady's chamber, in which her bower-women hope to make her lighter."

As she said this Mary Morison sat upright, shed back her disordered tresses, and looked on Jeanie and on Nanse, but said not a word.

Nanse had no desire to be silent; it was, perhaps, as much from a wish to keep the mind of Mary from reflecting on her sad situation, as from a natural turn for talking, that she now launched out: "Weel, Mary, lass, the hour that brought you a friend has made me a confirmed witch. Ask Jean Rabson there what she thinks of me now; she has heard of me flying through the air on a kale-stock; milking the kye of Drumcoltrum parks while sitting at my ain fire-side; nay, was it not her own brother James, a douce lad, and ane that had an ee to you, Mary, that shot at me in the shape of a hare last Hallow-eve was a twelvemonth, and hunted me with his two hounds till I was fain to turn into a moorhen, and fly for my life! But what's a' that compared

to my coming through the freestone of Elfin-glen just at the moment I was wanted, and who kens but that I was on my way to Locherbrigg-hill, when I heard the wish uttered! Word was brought me by a sure hand, and the servant mauna be slack when the master calls."

"Nanse, Nanse," said Jeanie, "the master whom by public report you serve, could have no desire that you should go on an errand of mercy—that ye should do a deed such as would help to save your soul."

"And wherefore no?" said Nanse. "What pleasure could Satan—since it's of him ye speak—have in hauling the soul of a poor auld feckless wife like me through the lowing caldrons of his dread abode?"

Jeanie stared at her, for she was little accustomed to such latitude of expression. "Nanse, woman," she said, "remember what day of the week it is on; and think, too, that Mary has dreed an awful sederunt to-day, and mayna just like to hear sic words. I winna say ye are cannie or uncannie, or that I either dread or fear ye; but, come frae what cause it will, ye hae helped me and relieved me in my hard mister and weirscales, and when ye are next our way, if ye will just ask for me at Howeboddum, I'll not only tie up a' the dogs, but I'll gie ye something home wi' ye that will keep ye cheerie in the winter hours, and James shall carry it to yere ain doorstane; only ye mauna bid him come in."

"There spoke all the parish of Glengarnock in one voice," said Nanse. "They will see things in a queer and perverse light. It's their pleasure to think me uncannie, and to call me witch. One gives me a meal, a second malt, a third butter, while a fourth says, 'Nanse, if ye'll no shake our bear and spoil our milkness, I'll send ye a ewe-milk cheese the morn.' If the folk of Glengarnock invest me with powers which dinna pertain to me, am I to be a fool and refuse the honour. Na, na, Jean, lass, there's nae drowning-stakes and toom tar-barrels now; the warst word I hear is witch, and the warst deed that's done to me is hunting my gib-cat and pouing my plums; sae I think I'll e'en continue to enjoy the revenue that arises from fear; it's a surer one than that which comes from love."

Mary had now arisen, and was standing at the entrance of the cavern during the colloquy which we have related. "Nanse, come here," she said, "and come, Jeanie, I hear such a sough and sound as I never before heard; there's something strange about to be wrought in the elements."

Nanse went to the mouth of the cavern, and looked up and looked down, and then laid her ear to the rock and listened. "We are owre lang here," she exclaimed; "it is the sough of the linn, and denotes a storm—see if there is na a huge cloud as dark and grim as death sailing to the hill-tops; there's a Solway-sea of water in its womb, and when

t opens, down will come the Elfin burn raging amid its inns, like a hundred devils—let us hame, lasses. I mind well the simmer spate of the year of grace sixty-and-six; a brook that might have gushed through a lady's bracelet at noon would have floated a revenue cutter before night: a weaver was drowned at his loom, and a hawk in her nest in Elfin linn. Listen to the sough again: it is the voice of God among the cliffs, crying to man to take care of himself; see if the wee black water pyat is nae quitting the very pool where it had its nest, and seeking the topmost towering cliff as a place of safety." So saying, she took Mary by the hand, and descending the abrupt path which led from the cavern, sought the Elfin-cottage; and, stirring up the fire, and eating herself on the long settle, composed herself like one disposed to become a guest.

To Jeanie, who had come to remain all night, this was not unwelcome; neither was it otherwise to Mary, who, shaken by the misery of the day, seemed anxious for the repose of evening, yet felt that night which now descended had not brought the cure and relief which she looked for. The sound of the stream grew more and more audible: clouds filled all the space between the earth and the sky, and the wind, which hitherto would not have shaken the leaf of the fern, rose high and sung in the lonely tree-tops, and moaned in the Elfin-cavern with a voice which, but for its loudness, might have passed for human. Apprehensions of the approaching storm were visible in Jeanie's face; she grew pale and anxious; it was otherwise with Nanse, who seemed not to dread, but to enjoy it: she went to the floor, nay, round the house, and as she went was heard to mutter, "Ay! a' ght and tight; the wind canna tirl't nor the spate reach, and if it pleases God to keep his forked lightning from us, we shall all see his blessed daylight again."

"She's a fearfu' person," muttered Jeanie, "and kens fair than she ought to ken, but I hae nae occasion to mope and mell wi' her. I'll speak her fair, however, for I shouldna ke to have our steading stript wi' ane o' her whirlwinds."

"Mary, my bonnie woman," inquired Nanse, "are ye the worse, think ye, of the sad kemping ye got in the kirk, and ye feel ony pain frae the fainting-fit in the Elfin-cavern? The minister's tongue's no quite so musical as a lady's lute, nor was the couch o' stane a bank of violets."

Mary moved her hands as if she implored silence, and said, in a low tone, "If I am suffering I have but myself to blame for it; the worst word to me in the kirk to-day was but owre gude, and the hardest spot in the Elfin-cave softer than I deserved."

"Hout tout, my bonnie lass," said Nanse, in a soothing tone, "ye're no half so bad as ye think; and as for those who were witness of yere shame to-day, there's some of

them I could name who ought to have hid their faces. Ye needna glowre at me, Jean; we a' ken that Ephraim Rabson's daughter, though no sae bonnie as she might have been, and she's gaye and weel that way too, has walked pure and upright; but as for Kate Kissock of Foulfosh—I saw her gae by wi' three feathers in her tappen, and Jenny Jamieson of Walawaas: and—but why should I talk of folly on a night like this? Only hear at the wind how it comes raving down the linn; if it gets na drink it will gae wild, and then what will come o' the faulded lambs on Glengarnock hills, and the poor feckless birds in bush and bower? We sit warm and cozie within biggit waas, and never think o' the bits o' feathered handywark o' God, how they maun bide the bensil."

"She canna be a witch and feel as she says," thought Jeanie to herself, and she moved her seat closer to that of Nanse, and gave her fears to the wind.

It was now well advanced in the night; not a drop of rain had fallen, and the wind, which in angry and lengthened gusts had shaken the trees like wands, dropped down so low as scarcely to be audible. "Is it possible," Nanse muttered to herself, "that the thing is to pass away like a dream; that all the signs and tokens of the earth and air are to be like auld wives' clashes? But that canna be. There never was a bairn born to that house—a lad bairn, especially—that had nae thae dread accompaniments. I maun be prepared." So saying, she produced a small walise, or large pocket, and from the interior of it fished up, first, two or three little thick round cakes; secondly, some white sugar, split neatly into small bits; thirdly, some hyssop, cut and chopped; fourthly, some dried flesh of hare; and fifthly, a neat cup and saucer, of an antique shape, with flowers varnished into the material. These she placed on the table, one by one.

"Nanse," said Mary, "my home is humble, and my wealth is small, but I have aye something in the cupboard to maintain the mense of the house. But I see ye put trust in nae-body."

"Deed, my bonnie lady," said Nanse, "ye are far mistaen in me, as the ballad says; I put trust in every one, but I darena put trust in myself; I am a wanderer—whiles I'm on yonder hill-top—whiles in some broomy hollow, and whiles I'm on the cauld open moorland, wi' no a creature near me but the moorhen and the whaup. Sae I even carry the materials of life with me; but these whilk I have produced now are no the common stuff that life's made of; they were selected with care and with knowledge, to be used when the hour comes—and I think it's e'en coming now."

While she was yet speaking large drops plashed on the

roof; a gust of wind came which seemed bent on rooting out bush as well as tree from the glen, while a gleam of lightning rendered sea and land alike visible, accompanied, rather than followed, by a clap of thunder, that seemed to run in the veins of the solid earth as well as through the air.

"There!" said Nanse, as she returned from depositing the iron crook and tongs on the outside of the house—"there's the forerunner; and it will be a gaye and stiff storm if that be a true sample. Mary, my doo, ye had better streek yersel down, and try and get a blink of sleep; but first take a cupful of my cordial, and eat a bit of my cake; ye will feel the benefit of them baith." So saying, Nanse prepared a beverage resembling tea, which she poured into the little cup we have already noticed; to this she added sugar and cream, and, taking with her one of the small round cakes, went to the bedside, and whispered, "Mary Morison, listen to me. D'ye understand these tokens in earth and air? They are intimations that a son is to be born of the Roldan blood. I ken the thing weel; and so it has ever happened since their castle stood in Glengarnock, and that's an auld tale. Drink this draught, and eat this cake; the dale will tell ye there's sorcery in the one and witchcraft in the other, but dinna trow them; it will be nae mair than enough to get ye through, the howe of this night. That's a good lass; ye will soon be something else. Now lay down your head, and compose yersel with your best skill." She retired from the bedside, and, sitting down by the fire, spread out her palms, and seemed for some time employed in prayer.

"Jeanie Rabson," she whispered, when she had concluded her devotion, "dinna mind me; I am aye of the old church, ye ken, and maybe my ways seem strange in your sight; but the cordial I have given her has been blessed beyond sea, and blessed here; and, moreover, it is sovereign in soothing women in the trial-pang. And the prayer I muttered was to the patron saint of the house of Roldan: sae all is done that can be done; but bless me! Jeanie, these are braw matters for a Morison: here's a laced cap, worth a couple of gowd guineas; a barrie-coat and bodice fit for a prince; and, did ever een see the like! a wrapper made, for aught I ken, of cygnet down. How has she come by these, think ye! They look like the castle! I'm rad this lass is no sae simple as she seems."

The other listened to these words of suspicion with an untroubled brow. "She is just what she seems, Nanse, and nae mair," Jeanie replied: "she has a proud spirit, and sae the hale land will see yet; but these braws she mauna bear a' the blame of, neither: what could a body do? I e'en put to my hand and helped her; she will find few enow to help her soon;" and the tears stood in the maiden's eyes as she spoke.

"I wish that I were really a witch-wife," said Nanse, "that when I shake all the crops and kill all the cattle of the hard-hearted nabobs of the land, I might spare what belongs to Howeboddum, to show my good-will to the name of Rabson. What's that? Did ye no hear a voice?"

Jeanie had been arranging, behind a little screen, the gear which we have allowed Nanse Halberson to describe, and was looking on it with a quiet eye when this question was put. "I hear naught," said she, "save the increasing sough of the wind, and the rushing splash of the rain: it's a dismal night!"

"It is just the fit night for a Roldan to be born in. Hear! D'ye no hear how the demon of the tempest is coming plunging from linn to linn; and see, the hand of time is on the stroke of twal'. That's the poor lassie moaning in her sleep; the cordial will enable her to steal a wee bit of a sough and a dover. O! I mind the night weel on which the present Lord Roldan was born: ye would have trowed that the air was on fire, and that demons were trampling down the green groves of Glengarnock: the very dead, it is said, crap out of their graves, and sat in spectral rows on the throughstanes, thinking it was the day of doom."

"Preserve us!" said Jeanie, edging her chair nearer to Nanse; "that's awful talk: would it no be wiser, think ye, to pray a scriptural prayer, than to be speaking of demons and the hour of doom! I trust both are distant."

"It's nae time for doctrine now," said the other. "D'ye hear that! All the little streams have united their floods, and poured them down the Elfin-glen: only look out! there's a torrent that would float Roldan castle, if it were a ship, and a thousand mariners on board."

By those acquainted with the strange rapidity with which streams swell into irresistible torrents when a thunder-plump descends on the uplands, no explanation will be required for the inundation which now poured down the Elfin-glen. Each little hollow acting like a filler, and every brae-side contributing its share, supplied the narrow linn with more water than it could well swallow; while trees, and stones, and earth, mingling with the flood, came tumbling down, dashing from rock to rock, from linn to linn, and from cave to cavern, with a noise and a tumult to which little in these isles can be compared. Just as the first tremendous dash of the torrent reached the leap beside the Elfin-cavern, and came plunging, with all its stones and trees, shaking the cottage as if the demon of the storm had seized it by the roof, a deep, deep moan, and a faint scream, hurried the two watchers to the bedside.

"I kenned it wad be this way," said Nanse. "They have baith come together, and I like it all the better. Mary, my doo! Mary Morison! it's a' safely owre;—it's a braw boy-bairn."

"Is it world-like!" murmured a low voice, "for oh, it has come in sorrow!"

"World-like!" exclaimed Nanse, "wha ever saw ane of the race that was na world-like! The Roldans are the handsomest forms in all the south countree."

A slight flush was visible on the mother's face at these words; she clasped her hands, and holding them above her, looked up and prayed—prayed for the fourth person of this little lonesome community.

"Ye maun take another mouthful of the blessed cordial," said Nanse. "Na, nae naysays: the noble grandmother of this bonnie boy—a bonnie boy he is, I can tell ye—drank the self-same draught out of the samen cup, when she was made lighter of Lord Roldan. Now compose yersel; I have had tenderer gear to handle than ye are, weel I wot; ye will do well enough."

The storm which still raged, and the torrent which still came pouring down, were unheeded by Jeanie in the deep interest which she took in this trying scene, and more particularly in the motions of Nanse, whose conversation and doing had not at all removed the kind of suspicious dread which her character was calculated to impress. She put some pure water into a basin; then taking a small vial from her bosom, added its contents to the water, drop by drop.

"Nanse," thus Jeanie interrupted her, "ye have done sundry things this night for which there is nae scripture warrant; the blessed cordial was aye, this water is another—it's a piece of papistry, I dread. This bonnie wean shall be brought up nae sic gray gate, I tell ye, as sure as I am in the body."

"Then wash and dress the bairn yersel," said Nanse, highly offended at the remarks about her creed.

Jeanie, without saying a word, took the babe tenderly between her hands, washed it gently and dexterously in water which she declared was unpolluted with popish devices, dressed it with equal neatness and skill, and then said, "I think I may venture to restore it to the mother's bosom, for oh! her heart maun be yearning for it."

Nanse looked on all this with an interest which showed that her sudden anger was as suddenly subsiding.

"Ye are an odd creature but a kind aye, Jeanie Rabson," she said, "and I shall never mair be vexed at what ye say, for ye mean well, ye mean well. Wha would have thought that a mim mou'd maiden could have handled a babe sae safely and drest it sae deftly! but ye needna offer it to the mother's bosom e'en now, for the blessed cordial, be it of papist or Protestant descent, is doing a kindly natural office. There, d'ye see how she's smiling in slumber! She thinks she has the babe in her balmy bosom. When could ye have made a drink that could have done that!"

"Nanse," said the other, "let us ken ane anither better frae this time forward. I never met wi' onybody that I found to be so bad as they were ca'd. But, oh! woman, why should ye gar us trow that ye are nae cannie, and why should ane sae sensible traffic and troke wi' the black delusions of papistry?"

Nanse smiled, though a cloud darkened her brow; and, taking the babe from Jeanie, she examined it all over, her face brightening and clouding alternately as she handled every part.

Then, inclining her ear bedward, and holding up her finger, said, "Mary's asleep still: I will read the doom of the babe: listen, Jeanie." Attentively did she listen; for the mysterious air and manner, and a certain knack in hitting marks afar off or dimly visible, had obtained for Nanse a reputation hovering between fortune-teller and witch.

"How long, and white, and round the fingers are, and how shapely the wrist and palm! I could show you, Jeanie, but it's Chaldaic to you and to millions more, how by ilka score and line I can see as plainly as in a book what will be the fortune of the babe."

"I'm no sure that such knowledge is lawful," said the other. "It is but the knowledge of nature," replied Nanse: "D'ye think that the fortune here, and the fate hereafter, of ane and a' of us, is not distinctly written down already? There's mair bright than what is black here: he will be a man; ay, and a brave and a noble ane; and win mair fame in far fields than all the Roldans ever won at hame, and they have nae won little. He will be in peril by man's machinations: and as he was born in a storm, so stormy at first will his fortunes be: he need neither dread fire nor steel, but let him beware of water. What was that? I heard something which belongs neither to the wind nor the rain without!"

"I hear nothing," said Jeanie. "And d'ye think, now, Nanse, that it is written he will be Lord Roldan! O! If I could but be sure of that, how light my heart would be; and O! what a load it would lift off the heart of Mary! Eh! I did hear something now!"

Nanse had already risen; and walking over the floor as softly as if she walked on eggs, opened the door, and went out. Jeanie imagined she heard whisperings: and, gently depositing the babe in the mother's bosom, went into the open air. The rain had ceased; the clouds were passing away; there she found Lord Roldan in conference with Nanse Halberson, and heard the latter say, in answer to the other's question—"A brave boy, and the mother in a healthy slumber."

Jeanie stepped in between them, and pushing away a purse which Nanse was on the point of receiving, said, "Take it back, my lord, and begone: you are insulting one who cannot now protect herself."

"You know not what you are doing, young woman," said Lord Roldan; "you are refusing fortune for the absent."

"I know well what I am doing," replied Jeanie; "and I carena what I am refusing: I am doing for Mary what I know she would do for me. Do you think that by gowden presents, and playactor speeches, ye can bring back peace to her bosom?"

"All the people are mad," muttered his lordship, "who speak or act for this young woman."

"You are a base and despicable person!" exclaimed Jeanie. "The moment that Mary found you vile and perjured, that moment ye were as a shadow to her. O that I had but my honest brother's strength, I would toss ye headlong into that raging stream, and let the demon that ye serve bring ye to dry land!" So saying, and half dragging her companion with her, Jeanie re-entered the cottage.

"Ye have a spice of the very demon that watches over the house of Roldan in ye, Jeanie Rabson," said Nanse; "and wha would have thought it! How d'ye think that Mary and her boy-babe will shoot owre the mony winters and simmers that maun intervene before he can take a man's task on him! Yon purse was heavy, Jeanie, lass."

"All the better, Nanse, all the better: we want nane of his benefactions; we wish never more to see his face; we wish never more to hear of him."

"We, indeed!" retorted the other; "did we baith err with the young lord—are we art and part in this matter! My certie! ye *we* weel."

"Yes, I say we," replied Jeanie, her brow flushing as she spake. "I say we to the world, because, though we were not comrades in folly, we shall be comrades now since she is in adversity. But oh, Nanse, what difficulty there will be in getting her proud nature to stoop to be obliged to any ane! It is there I dread her, and ye maun help me, Nanse; we maun lay our heads together, and even impose upon her that we may help her."

Nanse took Jeanie silently by the hand, and pressed it, while the tears were dropping from her eyes. "Ye are a right-hearted maiden—ay! I'll help ye, Jeanie."

When the morning dawned, the wreck which the storm had wrought was visible through the little vale: the herbs and flowers, rooted out by the torrent, were heaped on the cliffs which overlooked the pools of the linn, and large trees were swept away, or hung splintered and shattered around. The tenants of the linn had been the sorest sufferers.

"There they lie," said Jeanie, "the ringstraked, the speckled, and the spotted. There's a sermon in them: owre muckle o' the element they loved has been their ruin, as owre muckle prosperity is the ruin of man. Yesterday they wantoned in the stream, and lap, and swam, and longed

for a shower, to bring them flies from the air and food from the earth: the shower descended—and where are they? They were tossed about like straws by the impetuous torrent, and there they lie by the dozen among Mary's roses and lilies. Let us carry some of the fairest to her; for, as the sun is now risen, she will be awake."

They went into the cottage: Mary had admitted the babe into her bosom, and, with blushing cheeks and eyes filled with tears of mingled wo and gladness, was looking at the boy where he lay.

"God has not been unmindful of ye, Mary," said Nanse. "There's a boy to your bosom! such as a mother would pray for: he will be a blessing to you, and an honour to the land—and sae his fortune's spaed. But we maun find him a name: let us e'en lay his mother's and father's together, and call him MORISON ROLDAN."

CHAPTER III.

"Out spake a dame, of wrinkled eild,
O' gude advisement comes nae ill."

BURNS.

THE story of Mary Morison flew over the land. By some it was averred that she was the wedded wife of the young lord, who hesitated to own his love for one of low degree, and a heretic; others said that he was an infamous loon, and the lass a base limmer; while Nickie Neevison, dissenting from all, declared that the young lord rode down to the Elfin-glen at midnight, to own his marriage and kiss his babe, but was confronted by that witch, and what was waur, papist, Nanse Halberson, who coost her cantraips owre him, and hindered him from doing what was righteous, even though Jeanie Rabson—and blessings on her weel-faured face for it—fleeched, and prayed, and amaisht gade down on her knees to the carlin, to consent to the interview and the owning.

"But waur nor a'"—thus Nickie concluded her version of the story—"when the young lord—there's something gude in all of the name of Roldan—found that glamour prevailed, he had enough of Christian strength left to drop a purse of gowd—mair nor the carlin could weel lift—at her feet; and then, as grace wad have it, his horse bore him away frae peril. And what d'ye think she did wi' it? Laid it by for the creature and the guiltless wean? Na, troth atweel no: she flung it right into the raging torrent, and bade the devil dive for it if he wanted it; and that's as true as I am here."

These rumours reached at last the castle of Roldan : they entered first into the ears of the cowkeeper, the shepherd, and the gardener, who held the dread secret for the space of an hour ; and then, to make their minds easy, shared it with the dairy-maid, the kitchen-girl, and the errand-boy. For the ease of their consciences, those lower functionaries informed the steward and housekeeper of the rumour ; who went together and told it to the lady's own maid ; she instantly sought out the priest, and hesitated not to intrude on his devotions, to lay the important secret before him. The priest told her she was a good girl, saluted her, and said, " This comes of encouraging heretics ; I must communicate the same to my honoured lady. To err with one of the true church is doubtless an error ; but to commit folly with one of the unbelievers, is a sin for which the church demands severe atonement."

" But," said my lady's own woman, imboldened, perhaps, by the familiarity of the priest, " they say that our young lord holds queer notions in church matters, and disna take aught for gospel which the church believes. I myself have heard him say that some of the saints in our calendar were naves ; ay ! and that sundry of the ladye-saints were nae better than ye tell me Mary Morison is."

" My child," said the priest, bestowing a second and more effusive salute, " let not such things disturb you : it is enough that we keep up observances, and stand in the eyes of the world in the porch of the church ; we cannot all be in the sanctuary. I will enlarge on this at a more opportune season ; I must seek out the godly lady, and inform her of this mischance."

Lady Roldan was sitting in her withdrawing-room, clothed in silk so thick that her gown refused to sit down with her, but continued to stand, though not quite so stiffly as her two female attendants, who, mistaking the stateliness of their mistress for austerity, put on looks worthy of monumental alabaster before life and poetry dawned upon art. Those two household authorities were informing her of the ravages of the unlooked-for tempest of last night ; and though they both spoke at once, and both thought themselves listened to, it was evident that their lady's mind was not with their tale :—it was busy with an event ushered in by the like elemental strife ; namely, the birth of Lord Roldan. This communicated a melancholy thoughtfulness to her looks, which accorded well, too, with the dim but elegant antiquity of the room where she sat. The walls, and floor, and ceiling were of Scottish oak—as black as soot, and as hard as stone : tradition added—and all of one tree, too ; but the massive beams, and the deep and far-projected carvings, rendered the legend too romantic for even popular belief.

The seclusion in which the Lady Winifred lived, her stateliness of manners, and intercourse extending but to a few old Catholic families, impressed the people of Glengarnock with a respect for her in which there was a small admixture of the superstitious. As she was eminently charitable and humane, the hospitality of her house and her personal attentions were often called into action; for when a vessel was wrecked in the bay—and the shifting sandbanks rendered that a frequent occurrence—who was so ready as the household of Lord Roldan to help the mariners in their struggles for life, or whose hand was so ready as that of the Lady Winifred to render that life endurable which she had helped to preserve. She was therefore heard of chiefly in times of storm and disaster, which induced that district authority, Nickie Neevison, to aver, that her ladyship had more of the raven than the dove in her nature, since she only made her appearance when ships were sinking, women shrieking, and men drowning. All this was wellnigh lost on the peasantry in the dislike which they entertained for her religion.

"She's a good woman," said a Presbyterian; "it's a pity she's a papist."

"She'll get a scaud, I fear me, for a' her acts," said a Cameronian; "for good deeds are as cauld as clarts, and charity is but a filthy rag; she lives among gods of stone and of brass: will they save her! Na, na!"

"She caused three poor lads to be hauled frae the wild waters," said an Independent; "and gave them food, and wine, and red gold. How did she ken but she was stepping in between them and God, who was reading them a great moral lesson! it was an unweighed act, and if they work any mischief in the sight of Heaven, she'll find she has mickle to answer for."

Such were the notions held by the peasantry of the land concerning the charity of Lady Winifred on the morning to which we allude; and, to say the truth, her deeds that way were not at all acceptable to those of her own household. They beheld in every vagrant fed, every wanderer clothed, and every destitute person, whether of sea or land, who partook of her bounty, not a fellow-creature gladdened and sent on his way rejoicing, but a sort of human cormorant, crammed with the good things which should have found the way to their own lips; covered with the clothes which they reckoned their perquisites; and enriched with the money which they calculated on as an addition to their own wages due to their worth.

When it was announced to the Lady Winifred that Father Borthwick desired an audience, she rose, and retiring into the audience-chamber, placed herself in a sort of chair of state, in which the lords of Roldan sat while administering

justice. Whenever the lady thought it necessary to occupy this hereditary seat, the tidings spread through the family, and twenty ears and as many eyes were put in situations where they could both hear and see without chance of detection. The chair increased the solemnity of the scene: it was carved richly, and very massive; cherubs' heads terminating below in eagles' claws, presented their plump faces, and shone bright with frequent handling, throwing back at the same time their ample wings, forming arms too high for the ease of the occupier. On the back, thistle-blossom and leaves were intertwined with the cognizance of the house of Roldan, a scallop-shell and sword; and over the whole a mermaid was sculptured, with her long hair wandering like sea-waves, while, instead of harp or mirror, she bore in her hands a new-born male babe, countenancing the tradition that the family came from the sea. On either side of this formidable seat stood Lady Winifred's two female attendants; and all eyes were on the door, when it opened slowly, and Father Borthwick stood before her.

"Be seated, and be brief," said the lady, "for I have that on my spirits which requires private communing with my own mind." She motioned him to a seat, but Father Borthwick preferred standing; it gave something of an importance, he imagined, to his words; while a chair was rather a place for familiar conversation, and therefore unsuited for the purposes of rebuke, admonition, or denunciation; three points of Christian doctrine in which he excelled.

"Lady," said the father, "I come with no tidings of joy: the saints have permitted a shower to fall upon the mountains, which hath swollen the rivulets to rivers, and lambs have been swept away, with much fine linen that lay whitening on the banks."

Lady Winifred nodded, saying, "Go on, I have heard something of this; we shall find a remedy."

"The cure must come from Christ, lady, and from the holy Virgin, and from the blessed saints; but there are matters for which there is no cure, even the deep cancer of heresy, for it is of that I must now speak."

"Say on," said Lady Winifred; "we are not at this hour to learn that the ancient church is sore bestead in this land, and that foes, who never agree among themselves, have united against her, and desire to see the plough passed over the sites of her sacred altars. Go on."

Father Borthwick darted an indignant glance,—not at the lady, but at one of her two attendants, who chanced to be Presbyterian—took a hasty stride or two about the chamber, and thus continued: "And why is the true and ancient church begirt with foes? How has it happened that the heretical foot has been placed upon the believing neck? It the will of the saints, lady, as a punishment for manifold

sins; a punishment for slackness with hand and sword. The nobles of Scotland preferred their own quarrels to those of the faithful church; the nobles of England preferred their fair domains to the kingdom of the saints; yea, even the good and gallant house of Roldan served not the saints surely, but followed their headstrong natures, their own worldly devices; revelled in chambering and gallanting, even with heretics, and now behold the result! evil has come upon you."

"What, in the name of all that's holy," interrupted Lady Winifred, "has happened?"

"Please you, my lady," said her Presbyterian attendant, in return for the insulting glance we have alluded to, "your own bower and tire-woman, May Corsock, whom the pious father recommended, is less rosy than she used to be, and as she has just been with him for some space of time, she may have, by her confession, alarmed him for the purity of the household; and now, like the gray-bearded knight in the ballad of Tamlane, he comes to you crying,

"And ever alas, for thee, Janet,
For we'll be blamed a'!"

The lady smiled at this audacious speech; she rebuked her attendant, however, yet almost with an encouraging mildness, for she had formed her own opinion of Father Borthwick, and scarcely gave him the credit he demanded for self-denial and abstinence.

His first impulse was to unloose the thunder with which the church had armed him on the head of the waiting-woman; his second was to regard it as a bit of forwardness, and for this he had his own reasons. "Lady," he said, "there is a time for all things; but surely, after the events of the by-gone night, this is not the moment for light looks and levity of speech; but let it pass—she who has offended belongs to a lax church, and may claim license of speech as well as of conduct in all things."

"You talk of our license," said the offended waiting-woman of the creed of Calvin; "d'ye think I did nae see May Corsock coming out of your sitting-room this morning, wiping her lips—license, indeed!"

"It is the way of the world," said the father; "you distinguish not; there are two kinds of kisses—one after the flesh, one after the spirit; I saluted the young woman in the latter sense, according to the rules of my order."

"Let me hear no more of this," interrupted Lady Winifred; "the license of your order seems likely to lead to error; and you, you foolish person, you are not so young but you might have distinguished between a kiss which is after the fashion of this valley, and a holy salutation according to the church."

"Lord, my lady!" exclaimed the incensed waiting-woman, "do you think I don't know the difference between a blink of the sun and a glimpse of the moon! Moreover, the salute of which I spake was a sincere ane: it was, as aye of your ladyship's fool play-books says—a clamorous smack."

"I shall say out my say," said the father, very gravely, "when Lady Winifred can control her menials, and prevent them from aspersing holy men and pious women;" and saying so, he flung out of the room.

The Presbyterian attendant burst out into a fit of laughter. "I think," cried she, "I stopped the meddling priest; choked the snake in his own poison. Would you believe it, my lady, Father Borthwick came full of pious wrath to acquaint you with a wee fault which Lord Roldan, I am tauld, has committed; a fault of youth; yet at the same time was walking in the same way himself, only, to be sure, my young lord didna gang to work in the spirit of the church, while there's nae doubt that the father saluted May Corsock according to the rule and obligation of his order."

Lady Winifred drew herself up with some dignity, and said, "Trifle not with me! What has my son done? What dread crime has Lord Roldan committed, that neither meddling priest nor impertinent menial dare mention it?"

"At the twelfth hour of the night," said the attendant, "there was a boy-bairn born in the Elfin-glen; and, whether right or wrong, they lay the blame on our young lord."

"I know it all, my maidens," said Lady Winifred, "but my information came by a suspicious messenger; therefore go to the Elfin-glen and there learn the truth. Do your errand discreetly and mildly, for I always thought well of this minion, Mary Morison, and of the race she is come from. Go, both of you."

Never did a couple of hawks seek the haunts of the dove, nor a couple of hounds seek the home of the hare, with more alacrity and extreme willingness of heart than these two starched and scandal-searching spinsters turned their faces towards the abode of poor Mary Morison. They were of different countries, different creeds, different tempers, and different looks. She of the south was squat and plump, with small searching eyes, and a face like a firebrand; she of the north was tall and lean, and somewhat bent; and so puckered were her cheeks, and so brown her skin, that it seemed to have been stripped from a mummy and half stuffed for present use with Christian flesh and blood. The former was a Catholic, with all the ascetic rules by heart, though she observed none of them; those who wished to be well with her called her by her name at full length, Mrs. Clementina Smallbones; while her unfriends, of whom she had, like all favourites, a few, knew her by the name of the Dur-

ham Dumpling, in honour of her native neighbourhood; the latter was a Presbyterian in religion, and a Jacobite by education; she was from Gallawater, and named in the register-book Beckie Turnbull, but was much more widely known by the name of Sour Plooms of Gallashiels, in which was expressed at once the sourness of her looks and the place which gave her birth. Both were united to the house of Roldan by the services of their forefathers in the field, and of their own in the chamber, and were in all respects as complete fixtures in the household as the chair of state, on which we have bestowed so much description.

For a few hundred yards of the way the amiable Clementina and the gentle Beckie exchanged looks only of mutual surprise at the errand on which they were sent, and a few words on the growing depravity of human nature; they soon, however, were enough disengaged from matters of moral concernment to attend to—what was in their hands a source of perpetual bitterness—namely, the great question between the Protestant church and that of Rome. It is true, that they disputed about the dress, and quarrelled about the manners, and were acrimonious concerning the trappings, and tassellings, and outward show of things; but then, this by no means diminished the bitterness of their bickerings, for ladies are querulous in matters of millinery: the strife between them, too, was augmented by the recollection of the scene in which Sour Plooms had triumphed over Father Borthwick, and the Dumpling resented this because it humbled the Catholic church in the person of one of its ministers, and, worse still, was acceptable to Lady Roldan, and consequently, as she said to herself, put Sour Plooms upon pattens, and set herself upon the bare stocking-soles.

They had concluded a long and sharp bickering when the Elfin-glen, with its cottage and woods, appeared in view—the sum total was expressed in the ludicrous images with which they finished the strife. “The heretical church,” said Clementina, “is a discarded leman of the aristocracy, whom they have stripped of all her ornaments, and left her corrupt body in a ditch, with scarce a rag on to cover her nakedness.”—“And the Romish superstition,” retorted Beckie, “is a patched and painted madam; lame, with made teeth and bought breasts; all scarlet and splendour without, all rottenness and filth within—she pollutes whom she loves, and she poisons whom she hates.”

“Well said, Sour Plooms,” exclaimed Lord Roldan, bursting upon them from a thick roan or bank of hazels, which reached from the hills to the footpath. “Well said, by my faith; but the idea is in verse—

Pain'd by her love, or poison'd by her hate.

Who is the amiable lady that sat for the picture?”

"Even an old acquaintance of your own, my lord," answered Sour Plooms: "her that sitteth on the seven hills of Rome. Weel I wot, she has not touched a Scottish hill with her hinder end—clothed in scarlet though it be—these two hundred years."

"My lord," thus interposed Dumpling, doubly incensed at the words of her companion and the levity of the young lord, "it would be more like your birth, ay, and more like the religion in which you were bred, if, instead of wandering like one of Robin Hood's men in wild cloughs and savage places, that you went home to speak comfort to your lady mother, who is ill at ease. Last night was an awful night, and this has been an awful day."

"Deed," said Sour Plooms, "Clementina has right good cause to say what she has said. Word came, I wot nae well how, to Father Borthwick, that your lordship had been doing mair than you ought to have done wi' some one no far from the Elfin-glen; so what does he do but seeks May Corsock, and explains to the simple lassie—all in a pious way, and according, he said, to the rule of his order—the evil which your wilful worship has been playing, merely by way of nurture and admonition. I, being a heretic, mistook what was clerical for something else. Lady Winifred, though of the true church, fell into my heresy; so, you see, there has been naught but mistakes on all hands; and that being the case, let me advise your lordship to find your way home; your explanation and repentance will be swallowed now, and they may be spurned at to-morrow." They went on their way, and Lord Roldan, thinking Sour Plooms spoke sensibly, turned his steps towards the castle.

The coming of this ill-omened pair was to poor Mary Morison and her new-born babe what the presence of a couple of kites is to a mother thrush, sheltering under her outstretched wings her little household of half-fledged gorlings. She had just awakened from a refreshing sleep, and was blushing to look at the little nestler in her bosom, when Nanse Halberson whispered to Jeanie Rabson, "Here comes Sour Plooms and here comes Dumpling, from the castle, to harrow up the heart of our poor Mary with their questions and condolences. Haud your tongue like grim death, and leave me to deal wi' them—they'll no cross this threshold, and yet a crabbit word shanna cross my lips."

Nanse twitched her gown here, and pulled her gown there, set her broad bonnet awry on her head, stuck a roke with flax into her girdle, took a spindle in her hand, and sitting down in an old chair, right in the centre of the door, began to hum and spin. The sound no sooner reached the ear of an old overgrown cat, which sat drowsy by the fire, than away went grimalkin, reminded perhaps of other days, and springing into her lap, completed externals entirely to

her satisfaction. "Thou art the wisest of cats," said she, stroking down its glossy back; "thou hast thought beyond thy kind; I doubt thou art a witch in earnest."

The two messengers suddenly doubled a little hedge of green holly, and came full upon Nanse; Sour Plooms was foremost. Now had this happened in London or Edinburgh, cities into which superstitious fears never penetrated, no doubt Nanse and her roke, and her witch-like attire, would have alarmed no one and amused many; but in the Elfin-glen of Glengarnock, where some are in as great fear of being witched as the citizens of London of having their pockets picked, it was quite a different thing; not that such powers, though partly imputed, were altogether believed in; but it was thought advisable at least to avoid intercourse with certain unsonsie dames, of whom honest Nanse was one, as it was reckoned discreet to keep a sharp look-out in haunted places by all who had imaginations and travelled late. Our readers must not marvel, therefore, when we tell them that, on beholding this unsonsie vision, Sour Plooms not only pulled up at once, but, as Dumpling averred, actually fell back upon the rear division, upsetting her in a moment, and tumbling her down the brae, as Sour Plooms added, like a Dutch cheese, or a hot haggis into which some mischiev-loving hand had put quicksilver. In truth, both were alike alarmed at first; though, in relating the interview afterward, it was all courage in the one and cowardice in the other. Dumpling always concluded by observing, that "Sour Plooms forgot that the whole was foreordained;" while Sour Plooms remarked, that "no such tremour could have come over them, had her companion brought but a drop or two of holy water, blessed, in the spirit of his order, by the pious lips of Father Borthwick."

They now rallied and advanced together, and then came to anchor close to where the adversary sat. Nanse fixed her eyes upon them and said, "It's fulfilled now; here are three of us; and weel I trow, we might pass for the weird sisters; I have waited three stricken hours for your coming." So saying, she continued drawing out the thread, and winding it as she twisted it on the roke.

"Speak her fair, Beckie, speak her fair," whispered Clementina, "for she is a fearful woman, and can disturb our sleep, and spoil our appetite, and turn our pillows into hedgehogs, and our snowy sheets into blistering-plasters—O speak her fair!"

"Hout, tout, woman," muttered Sour Plooms, "she has nae sic skill; all her art can only make a cow keep up her milk, cream retain the butter, and turn a godly salute, bestowed in the spirit of the holy church, into a worldly kiss, which may cost a skirling."

"Now it is done," said Nanse, suddenly rising and cast-

ing her arms about, "it is done, and ye shall have the advantage of it. There! the tane haud the roke, I'll pou the thread, and every turn I gie round thy thumb thus, the tither maun keep count; and if ye tyne haud, or lose count, ye will not only never learn what is to be the fortune of the house of Roldan, but ye will be liable to be turned into fillies when ye gae sleep, and galloped till daylight owre the heights of Shehallion, and the cloudy tops of Penmanmaur. Mind what I say, kimmers."

Both expressed their readiness to do any thing that Nanse, whom they called douce and honest, desired, saving and except the touching of enchanted thread—the thread of fate—and counting the quantity.

"It's no that I have any dreador of doing it," said Sour Plooms, "for thread's thread, and words are words; and I have aye keepit gaye and perpendicular in the sight of man; but there's nae scripture warrant for it; here's Beckie, she's blind with the delusions of papistry; she may do all ye bid her; and by doing it in ignorance, be saved: while I, alas! would err against the clearest light."

"Fools baith!" exclaimed Nanse. "Will the roke harm ye, though it grew owre a put down man's grave? Will the thread hurt ye, though I span it to a tune whilk Clootie himself whistled at Tib of Gilgourack's wedding?" In vain she offered the roke: both stood their ground, but drew back their hands, dreading to touch, yet desirous of being admitted to her mystery on less suspicious terms. "Gae hame to your ladye mistress, ye gowks," said Nanse; "and tell her to do her own errands herself. Come here again,

• 'And dread a kittle cast.'"

She finished by shutting the door, while Sour Plooms and her companion returned to the castle, glad to conclude a dangerous enterprise so safely, and diffusing the many-coloured hues of their alarmed fancies over the sayings and doings of uncannie Nanse.

This happened about the commencement of summer, and harvest was advanced before Lady Winifred was able to fulfil her purpose of visiting the Elfin-cottage and its hapless inhabitants: she had been ill, and her physicians prescribed repose, bodily and mental. She recovered the sooner that Father Borthwick did not venture to hurt her body by alarming her soul; and—we speak it with doubt and apprehension—from two visits which, at Lady Winifred's express request, Nanse Halberson paid her in her own chamber, without witnesses—she obtained great relief. We must however say, that half the household, with Sour Plooms at their head, prayed—they called it remonstrated—that her ladyship would eschew all comings and gangings,

conversations and communings, with women possessed with familiar spirits, and that she would allow them to sign the sign of the cross with a sharp knife on the brow of Nanse Halberson when she next crossed the castle gate. As this kind proposition was not conceded, the lady herself was accused among her menials of witchcraft, and a taste for such kittle-cattle, as Sour Plooms called them. But when Lady Winifred commanded her two attendants to accompany her to the Elfin-glen, they both broke out with, "Weel, what maun be maun be : here will be a bonnie gae to !

"They gallop fast whom deils and lasses drive."

Mary Morison, not at all dreaming of such a visit, was in her garden spinning fine flax, in which she excelled ; her dress was neat, and her hair, deprived of the symbolical fillet or snood, hung in one glittering fleece over her shoulders, and kept waving and curling with the breeze, audible, and no more, among the bushes of the glen. It was mid-day, and the sun was warm : the bees were busy, the flowers of the season were in bloom, and her son, Morison Roldan—we give his full name again—was on the bank at her feet. As he rolled to one side his little fingers would clutch at a flower ; or, as he rolled back to the other, his eyes would brighten at the sight of a butterfly or a bee ; nor did the latter show any wish to raise an angry hum as he shook the blossoms from which they were extracting sweets. He seemed conscious of the beauty of the flowers and of the labours of the bees, for he smiled as the latter alighted on a blossom, which he strove with his short arms to reach. His joy brought now and then a faint smile to his mother's cheek ; and so much was her mind occupied by tender and melancholy thoughts, that she was not aware of the approach or presence of a stranger till Lady Winifred in all her glory stood before her.

This was put down by that lady's two attendants to what the one called "the vile," and the other "the stinking pride," which they averred was the only birthright of the house of Morison.

"For, Clementina," said Sour Plooms, "the very mavis that was singing sae sweet aboon head, as soon as it saw us and my lady, dropped its song—reason good ; for even we mauna speak in her presence unbidden, and as it flew away it maist brushed with its wings the good-for-naething's brow, as much as to say, Look about ye, for yere betters are coming."

"Ay, and Beckie," whispered Dumpling, "Mary could not but know that we were near ; for had we not to put forth our hands, and not only hold my lady's brocaded gown aboon the thistles that choke the land, but to guide it safely

through the barn slit of a garden gate? and yet she neither minded nor cared: had she been educated, her ear could not have resisted the music of such rustling silk—she merits her fate."

Indulging in these pleasing and charitable reflections, they took their places on each hand of Lady Winifred, and imposed no weak caricature on the splendid picture of tragedy and comedy attending the Tragic Muse.

As soon as Mary Morison was aware of this dread visitation, she arose, laying aside her work, and slightly courtesying, stood before Lady Winifred with a look at once doubled and firm, while the contest of feelings in her face, giving her cheeks one moment to the rose and the other to the lily, added to the brightness of expression for which, it is still remembered, her face was remarkable.

The lady spoke first, and it was in no conciliatory tone: "So, minion—for like the heretic minister of these parts I will not name you, but from a different reason than his—so, minion, you have added to the numbers of your establishment since we last met," she glanced at Morison as she spoke, "and that, too, without the sanction of a church or her holy or heretic." Sour Plooms and Dumpling glanced at each other, as if ready to renew their seven years' war on creeds, and tossed their noses, breathing hostility and disdain. "So, minion, I say," continued the lady, "you have forgot the lessons of the church; you have forgot what was due to my station and family, and laid your cares for those whose pure and ancient blood should never mingle with aught so mean and servile."

"Madam," said Mary, "I have indeed neglected the lessons which were taught me, and neglected the example which was set me. Oh! it was but last night, as I knelt over my father and mother's grave, I thought the very dust beneath my knees stirred, as if conscious of the guilty burial. Madam, I have sinned, but I laid no snares. Alas! I did, I caught the goreshawk instead of the dove." Lady Winifred reddened, cheek and brow. "Gorehawk! minion, you goreshawk it well!—but be it so—no noble bird of my house will stoop again on so mean a quarry. Have you any thing more to say?"

"I understand your simile, madam," said Mary; "but I need neither clip the wings, nor otherwise restrain, for the noble birds you wot of. I trusted—I believed my vows and plighted oaths, and sinned. What has that brought me to? A cup of cold water, and a home deserted by all but its miserable owner, and a faithful friend who. But I speak not to complain; yet hear me, and forgive me or not: the wind which stirs these flowers shall dry them—the honey which these bees suck shall poison the head of sustain them—the stream which flows over these

rocks shall melt them—and the draught which this desolate babe now solicits from my breast—hush ! Morison—shall turn to nitric acid and destroy him, when I listen again to Lord Roldan.”

She sat down, clasped her boy to her breast, put her hand and foot to her little wheel, and, though her long white fingers trembled, she drew a thread round and evenly.

“ You should not sit down in our lady’s presence without permission,” said Clementina. “ But when had one of your church any touch of courtesy !—they keep on their hats before God.”

“ Had she been nurtured,” said Sour Plooms, “ under the pious Father Borthwick, she would have learned courtesy in the spiritual meaning of his order.”

“ Silence, both,” said Lady Winifred, with a frown. “ And, minion—Mary, I mean—listen to me. Abide by your resolution and your babe, and you shall know no want ; forget it, and I shall make this glen tenantless and houseless, and turn thee to the world to feel its scorn, and, worse still, its pity.”

“ Lady Winifred Roldan,” said Mary, rising up, “ from your proud house neither me nor mine shall accept food or raiment. I have long since made up my mind what to do ; for it was not yesterday that I learned vows were to be broken like dicers’ oaths. But the words spoken about this little glen and humble shealing might have been spared. They belong not less to the Morisons than your castle belongs to the Roldans. My ancestors paid down drops of their hearts’ blood for all, and more than they got. Good day.”

She hastened out of the garden as she spoke, bolted the door of her cottage, and knelt in prayer, desiring strength and support.

“ It’s a pity but she had been born aboon the salt,” said Sour Plooms. “ She’s as proud as the best lady of the land : she has either a drop of the deil’s or the Roldan’s blood in her ; but the latter canna weel be, for the women of her house all feared God and eschewed evil, from the days of John Knox till now.”

CHAPTER IV.

" Balow, my babe, lie still and aleepe,
 It grieves me sair to see thee weipe;
 If thou'st be silent, I'll be glad,
 Thy mairning makes my heart full sad.
 Balow, my boy, thy mother's joy,
 Thy father breides me great annoy."

LADY ANNE BOTHWELL'S LAMENT.

To all the people in Glengarnock the mother and babe of the Elfin-glen seemed destitute. How they would shoot over the coming winter, when snows were on the ground, and the nipping spring, when frost-rime whitened every rock and tree, furnished matter for conversation to all; nay, even the laird of Howeboddum and his sister Jeanie were among the marvellers; though some averred that they could not comprehend what a douce quean like the laird's sister could mean by paying so many visits to the Elfin-cottage, and, more than that, how she could thole to see Mary Morison and her babe perish, as perish they must unless fed miraculously. But though the winter was severe, and the spring far from sunny, Mary and her son looked little like perishing; they were not only well clad, and healthy, and ruddy, but never wanted something for the table when a stranger called, nor a handful of meal or a half-penny for the poor wanderers who lived by begging their bread through the land which their Bible taught them to believe God had given them for an inheritance. How this came to pass we shall explain, for we hate mystery.

Mary Morison had a great mind, a ready hand, and a resolved spirit. She said truly when she told Lady Winifred that she had fully made up her mind what to do; and in this what to do was, as our readers will imagine, included sustenance for herself and her child. She was young, she was active, she was willing; she could sew, she could spin, and could, as Nickie Neevison averred, work mair marvels wi' her needle than a ballad-maker could relate in rhyme. On these accomplishments, humble as they were, she not only depended for support, but expected to raise from them sufficient money for the education of Morison—perhaps as much as would put him to college. In these hopes and resolutions she was strengthened and confirmed by Jeanie Rabson, the o'er word of whose song was, "Mary, never despair; do your best, and if ye canna do all, God, or some other gude friend, will make out the rest—never despair."

Mary was none of the despairing kind; though she lived

in a lonesome glen, she never expected to be fed by the ravens. She wrought early and she wrought late; she span till the blood of her white fingers died the thread; she sewed till her eyes grew dazzled with lamplight and snowy seams; and she wrought all manner of flowers upon muslin and lawn, with a neatness and an elegance which brought customers, even those who were partial to a good pennyworth. In winter she wrought at home; but when the summer season arrived she left her cot, and taking with her Morison and much of her flowered work, she travelled into what are called the wool-lands, where she bartered her work for the finest wool with the shepherds' wives and daughters; and usually returned with enough to employ her head and hands for a couple of months in the manufacture of stuff, composed of fine flax and fine wool: a durable cloth, nearly as rich and glossy as silk.

It is true, that at first the sale for such productions was far from extensive, and Mary had a hard struggle to get ends to meet. She was the better able to do this from a taste which suddenly grew in Jeanie Rabson for flowered mantles, wrought collars, and even gowns, ornamented with leaf and flower, all done by no other hands than her friend Mary. Then Jeanie always allowed the other to fix her price; because, she said, "Mary really charges moderate for kerchiefs and mantles that might grace a queen; and though I mayna want sic gear just now, it's as weel to get a bargain while pennyworths are to be had; besides, it's no as if I had to pay hard siller for them; a teat of butter, or a stane of meal, or, maybe, a cheese or a ham mair than we can use at Howeboddom, satisfies Mary, so that I may say I get the things for half-naught." In this modest and generous way did one rustic maiden help another in what she called her "wae days;" for be it observed that courtesy and high-souledness are of Heaven, and not confined, as some authors ridiculously allege, to those who sit above the salt.

All this was not unobserved by the people of the vale, and their comments upon it were according to their various natures. Nickie Neevison, foremost of all, said, "Jeanie Rabson of Howeboddom will ere lang surprise the world as mickle as Mary Morison has done. She gets ae fantastic piece of finery after another, and will, if she does nae call a halt, have the half of Howeboddom on her back; I never liked these solid sicker-foots; they make tremendous whamles whiles."

"Troth atweel, and that's true, Nickie," said Peg Sillock of Sorbie. "It's no the rattling cart that coups soonest; but I am told that Jeanie disna do all this out of her ain head; her brother the laird is at the bottom of it a': and if he does it, as I doubt nae he does, for the love of Mary Mor-

ison, then he's safter than some fowk ca' him; and that's saft enough."

"Ye're a' mistaen of Jean," said a third authority, and that was Sour Plooms herself. "She's a cunning, cannie, bargain-making cuttie, and they say she's making twice her ain siller out of the handiwork of the other. As for her of the glen—we dinna name her name in the castle, nor will I name her name here—but she's baith good and bonnie; and I ken are that may seek lang before he gets a bride wi' a fairer face or a kinder heart. I have named nae names any how, sae nane can carry my clash to the castle."

Others than the laird of Howeboddom and his sister showed respect for Mary. Though her garden was filled in the season with flowers and fruit, the hands which plundered the castle orchard touched neither her apples, her pears, nor her plums. Though the Elfin-glen was full of cherries, raspberries, and nuts, not even the wildest schoolboy thought of entering and plucking; nay, though the stream that flowed round her door swarmed with fish, which Mary had not the skill to catch, no one threw a line or neeved a trout, save now and then when some rustic Samaritan, more active in virtue than the rest, would, as a matter of amusement, catch a dozen or two and leave them at her door, saying, "These are for little Morison, who will soon be able, poor fallow! to fish himself, and then he can return the compliment: and I'll warrant he will do it, and mair, for really he's growing a fine boy, and will be a credit to us a'." The mother looked on Morison and smiled, and could not help feeling in her own heart that neither his looks nor his merits were overrated.

What the boy would become occasionally employed the attention of some of the district sages, who desired to be reckoned prophets. "I cannot make out the bairn at a'," said one; "I saw him running like an unbroken colt about the glen, making the cliffs ring with his din; he seemed to have nae aim in his sport. I doubt he's half a haveral."—"Ye have seen him, then, as I never saw him," said the second worthy. "I have seen him thrice, and ilka time he was sitting like a sautpowk, reading volumes of fool songs and ballads. It needs nae prophet, nor prophet's son, to foretel the upshot of that: if the malady of the muse comes on him, he had better be lying at the back of the Robin-rigg, with five fathom of seawater flashing owre him."—"There's just ae thing," said the third and last authority we shall quote, "that can save him frae baith the evils ye allude to, and that is to send him to the school of that wise and fructifying teacher, John Milligan; if there's aught in him, he'll bring it out; if there's naught in him, he will put it in, and sae he's sure to be benefited. But there's ae drawback—wha will pay the penny wage? Half a crown a quarter,

nae less, for reading; a shilling mair for writing, and another shilling for arithmetic. It's weel that learning's useful, for oh! it's dear."

The conclusions of these authorities had something of inspiration; for, on the self-same day and hour, Mary had reasoned herself into the resolution of sending Morison to the barony school, kept by the aforesaid John, or, as he was commonly called, Dominie Milligan. She had taught the boy to read his Bible, and he did it with a graceful ease; she taught him to write, and he acquired it with singular readiness; but she wished him to have the advantage which rivalry in a school confers on all. But while she resolved on this, a dread of her own lonesomeness came over her; she thought of the hours which his presence made light, and of the dark reflections which his innocent smiles had brightened. "It was but yesterday," she thought, "that when I sung that most melancholy sang—which, alas! I sing owre often, 'Lady Bothwell's Lament'—he came to me when the tears were happing down my cheeks, and said, if he knew but who wrote a sang that made his mother unhappy, he would go and kill them. Poor bairn! I shall miss him much: and yet his mind must be adorned with knowledge, that he may shed honour on one that, alas! can shed none on him."

"Mother," said Morison, hanging round her neck, "I'll never leave you."

"O yes, my boy, ye maun leave me; it will be for your ain good. Ye maun learn the wisdom which is contained in books; ye maun become learned in the language in which God conversed with his chosen people, and in which Christ announced the salvation of believers; otherwise ye will not be able to preach the word wisely."

"But, mother," he said, "I dinna want to be a minister; I wad rather gang and push my fortune as men did lang syne, that I may win gold and jewels wi' a sword in my hand, and gie them to you when I hae done."

"Bless the boy! where did ye learn all these wild thoughts?" inquired Mary, looking strangely on him.

"O, Nanse Halberson told me of knights belted and thrice belted; and I read of others who fought for ladies in distress, and won great battles; and songs were made and sung to the harp in their praise; and kings honoured them, and princes placed them on their right hand."

"The bairn's demented," said Mary, with a sigh at his visions; "and the sooner I send you to douce John Milligan the better."

Now Dominie Milligan was a primitive sort of person: he was one of those singular, and, as they call themselves, persecuted sect, Cameronians, and had been educated for the ministry. But sundry obstacles stood in the way of his

preferment,—his elevation was deferred till he could be cured of what the flock called John Milligan's Four Vanities. These vanities were as follow. First, he advocated the propriety of the Broken Remnant, as they called themselves, descending from worshipping God on the hill-tops, and erecting a tabernacle on the plain—which was called a manifest distrusting of Jehovah, who, though he sometimes greeted them with a thunder-shower, which forced its way through the scone bonnets and hoddens gray of the most obstinate believers, was nevertheless understood to mean it simply as a chastening, perhaps a benediction. Secondly, he showed a manifest want of reliance in the Jehovah of the Covenant, by openly carrying to Quarrelwood Sacrament a profane utensil called an umbrella, and displaying it there like a banner, even over the bald head of that good man, John Curtis—when mercy was falling like manna in the guise of rain—to the shame and scandal of all sound Christians. Thirdly, he openly, and in the presence of John Curtis, Archibald Rowat, and Ebenezer Farley, preachers of the word, avowed his admiration of the ornamented, and, as he called them, eloquent compositions of that episcopal backslider, Jeremy Taylor; preferring them to the prophecies of Alexander Peden, and saying that he liked the sound of thunder better than he did the braying of an ass. Fourthly and lastly; he scrupled not to observe, with devout strictness, that ordinance of man's making and of human wit, the Government Fast, which was a plain owning of the man George Guelph—a king not called through the blessed covenant, but by a profane and episcopalian assembly denominated “the Parliament.”

As a sort of set-off against the “Four Vanities,” it was urged—but this was only by a few—that the dominie's life was strict and exemplary; his learning, even in the eyes of a laxer kirk, considerable; and though he fairly failed in preaching the word on one or two occasions, that now and then, with a text to his mind, he displayed a touching and simple eloquence, which moved even the sternest, and induced James Macgee, and Mark Macrabin, and Andrew Kennedy—all wise members of the congregation—to declare that John Milligan would, but for the four damning vanities, be a burning and a shining light. One of the texts given as a trial of his genius, from which he failed to draw forth a spiritual balm for his people—was simply the word “pomegranate.”

“O, he had na the savour of true doctrine,” said the aforesaid Macrabin; “he handled the pomegranate as if it had been a frosted potato.” There was nothing for him, therefore, but to turn himself to less lofty labours; and, as the barony school was vacant, he was inducted, with all the

advantages thereunto belonging, on the very day on which Morison Roldan became one of his scholars.

When Mary Morison heard that Dominie Milligan was master of Glengarnock school, she instantly resolved to lay down book and birch, and commit her son to his care. The parish school was two miles distant; besides, it was kept by Dominie Macnaught, whom the peasants called Sleepy Samuel; because, when called at times to preach the word in the absence of the established pastor, he preached in such a sort as sunk them all into slumber. She was aided in her resolution by the arrival of Jeanie Rabson, to whose judgment she submitted the question of schooling. "Jeanie," she said, "I have proud thoughts—owre proud, maybe. Here I have six webs of the finest linen, weel worth sixty white shillings each; four webs of linsey-woolsey, as bright as silk, for which I have refused fifty shillings a piece; moreover, here's flannel and harn claith, more than we'll baith want for years, and more making ready, sae I have at least ten pounds' worth to spare." On these domestic treasures Jeanie glanced with a satisfied eye as they were displayed before her. "Then," continued Mary, "we have meal in the kist, barley in the powk, maut in the barrel, flax growing green and long on Bankfoot-holm, potatoes flourishing in the mains of Foregirth, wool and lint for the spinning: and see, lass! there's a pose! fifteen gowd guineas, no less, forbye crown-pieces, and all of my own making, with the blessing of God, and the help of thee, Jeanie Rabson."

"My help," said Jeanie, "bless the woman! I have helped mair to pou ye down than to haud ye up. I wish ye but heard the laird telling me that I ought to take baith meat and drink wi' me to Elfin-cot, for he's sure that my visits are frequent enough to eat ye out o' house and hald."

Mary shook her head, and the tears came to her eyes. "Jeanie," she said, "God has ta'en mair pains in making ye than ye take in showing his wondrous gifts. But that's no what I wanted to say: I think, since we stand sae weel wi' the world, that we are justified in giving poor Morison a lift into the Latin; for oh! I'm set on having him made a minister, an honour which my brother Simon was laid out for, but God interposed."

"I have just come here to speak about that same," said Jeanie. "I canna tell how it is, Mary, but this Morison of thine clings to a' our hearts. But I agree wi' you—ay, look up. Besides, it's a grand thing to be learned; even the semblance o't has its effect: d'ye mind how Nehemiah Mac—I canna mind the remainder of his name—made sic an impression on a whole hill-side o' hearers, by repeating, whenever his ain gumption fell short, three lang words of Chaldaic or Slavonic, I forget whilk; but O, the sough and sound of them was grand, though I have heard this very

Dominie Milligan aver that they werena words, but mere melodious inventions. But a' this time, where's my boy, where's Morison?"

At the well-known voice of Jeanie, out came Morison from a little closet, where he had a nest rather than a bed, with a few books supplied by the care of his mother and the something touched taste of Nanse Halberson.

Jeanie stroked down his bright locks, which showed more than a desire to curl, looked on his clear broad brow and in his finely-formed face, and saying inwardly, "Ay, baith father and mither are here;" turned him suddenly round, then pushing him from her at full arm's length, cried, "Mary, woman, what's the meaning of all this! Where's my boy's green jacket, that we made wi' sae mickle care! Where's his scarlet waistcoat that I sewed for him in Howeboddom house, when a' fowk, save our Jamie and mysel, were asleep! And where's his sarks, wi' the faulding collars, ruffled wi' cambric, that might mense a lord! Ye have made a fright of him; ye have made him as bare of a' that's handsome, as a rosebush is at Yule—the very dogs will bark at the bairn. Morison, yere mither has turned ye frae as bonnie a boy as the sun ever shone on, into a potato bogle—'deed have ye, Mary!"

The boy laughed, but the moment he looked on his mother he saw that she was moved. He therefore slipped into his little closet, and began to arrange his clothes and books, while the following conversation took place between the friends:

"Jeanie," said Mary, "I was till yesterday of your mind: I was, I own it, vain of my son, and of his good looks and merits, and thought how well dressed he would be at school, and that baith outwardly and inwardly he might haud up his head wi' the best of them. But, O! woman, I got a sad awakening from my dream: Morison—he has ta'en muckle to books of late—had, it seems, been looking among the humble heir-looms of our house, and laid his hand on the Bible that my great grandsire, Gideon Morison, bore about his person whether in peace or in war, and which was stained with his own heart's blood at Marston Moor, in repulsing the charge of Prince Rupert. The bairn was looking for the blood of his ancestor, and O! Jeanie, he found that, and he found mair—the record of his mother's shame."

"His presence be about us!" said Jeanie. "What enemy could have written it, there?"

"I am that enemy," replied Mary. "In that book are recorded the marriages, and births, and burials of my father's house. Morison's birth is there; but, alas! no marriage of his unhappy mother—would that her burial was written in it, for this shame is not to be borne."

"Compose yourself, Mary," said the other. "I thought

all this bitterness had flown off seven lang years syne. But what did Morison do when he read it!—he couldna understand it—he's owre much of a bairn for that."

"Oh Jeanie, lass, we only deceive ourselves when we lippen to the ignorance of children; they have a wonderful quickness—some of them, at least. There's Morison, his nether lip aye tauld me when I was treating him owre mickle like a child—but I forget myself. Ye asked me what he did—he did naught but look in my face and say, 'Mother, had I a father?' I could do nothing, Jeanie, but catch him to my bosom, and half suffocate him with sobs and half drown him in tears."

Jeanie Rabson wiped her eyes and said, "Weel now, something of this kind was to have been looked for;"—and there she paused.

"Ay, Jean, ye see what sin and folly bring upon us—us! God forgive me, Jeanie, for the word; I mean to share my guilt wi' naeboddy—I have borne it singly, and can bear it still; but, O! the time will come when I maun break it to poor Morison. I am doubting that this cruel world will do that before me; and that, when he masters wi' the strong hand, and maybe wi' the strong mind, some sump whose parents have not erred, the name that disnae become me to utter will be applied to him, and my bairn will hae his heart broken—or his neck—for he's as wilful as the north wind, and will never put up with it."

Jeanie Rabson knew not what to say. "Mary," she at length murmured rather than uttered audibly, "the world disnae think sae seriously as ye do in this matter. There was the great house of Nithsdale itself; what a tumble it would hae got frae the Johnstones, hadnae the hand of a bastard son held it up! I trow, when he stormed Lochwood castle and mounted the foremost, married valour was in the rear of bold Robin Maxwell. And what's mair, was he wedlock born, lass, that came ower the sea wi' a clan of Normans at his back—the Roldans were amang them, sae there's nae lie in the matter—and took the crown of England, and put it on his head as bauldly and wi' as mickle honour as if he had been born till't! Hout, lass, put the cloud frae yere brow, and dry yere een; the time may come yet when the faut o' his birth will be an increase of his merit, an' ye will be ane of the proudest mithers of the land."

"God send it may be sae!" said Mary: "but now I have nae mair to say. Ye see the cause that made me put the bairn in hoddan gray; his hamely dress will no seem to be presuming, and the scholars may forget the faut o' his birth; but, O! I doubt he'll remind them with his merit."

"That's the best thing that can happen, lass," returned Jeanie. "But now if Morison be ready, I'll see him to school, and maybe say a word in season to the dominie;

he was aye of my joes, lass, and I can twist him yet round my wee finger." The boy, who it is likely was waiting for this, made his appearance in a moment; and Jeanie, taking him by the hand, walked away towards the residence of the dominie, which lay a Scotch mile to the south.

Morison was all new-found joy and new-awakened delight: he was like a bird hitherto confined to the nest; but the growing of whose wings tempted it out to the twig, and showed the balmy wilderness—its future inheritance—before it. With the Elfin-glen, and all that was in it, from its topmost crag to the bottom of the deepest pool, he was as familiar as the sun that shone on it daily. He had visited the nest of the blood-crow, on its hereditary tree, where no creature without wings had ever before ventured. He had sauntered into all the intricacies and sinuosities of the Elfin-cavern, though Nanse Halberson assured him it was not only haunted, but that, unless he could repeat the goblin's watchword who held it, the sides would close, and he would be shut up for ever. Nay, child as he was, he had absolutely penetrated as far as rimes in certain old books of divinity which lay in his mother's house, in which the males of the name of Morison read resolutely on Sundays, and with which the females during the rest of the week subdued their rebellious linen. With all these matters Jeanie made herself acquainted as she walked Morison away to the dominie's establishment.

On reaching the school, which consisted of two rooms, one for the scholars and the other for the master, a loud humming sound was heard, which seemed to issue from door, from windows, nay, from the roof of this humble dwelling.

"We are owre late," said Jeanie; "the bairns are at their lessons. O, it's pleasing now to hear the sound of sae mony innocent tongues, all targing away at the scripture—bide a wee! I could wager, by the sort of rough unmusical din, that they are on the twelfth chapter of Nehemiah. Eh, lad! if ye could but read with the feeling and the grace o' yere mother, ye wad bang them a'. And I wish ye may, though I shouldna say that either, seeing that my ain second cousin's bairns are amang them."

Jeanie tapped at the door; the multitudinous sound of voices ceased at once; the door opened, and Dominie Milligan stood before them with the open Bible in one hand, and his sceptre of rule in the other, viz., five formidable thongs of leather, hardened at the tips by means of fire, and bound carefully with green silk thread to a handle of elder-wood—a present from a step-father, as an atonement for sending two refractory children.

"Eh, Miss Jean Rabson, is this you!" exclaimed the dominie, receiving the offered hand of the spinster, "and who is

this now ! This is a face new to me ; but I like it, there's thought on the brow, though there's roguery on the lip."

"Weel, Maister John," said Jeanie, "it maun be your task to bring out what's on the brow, and keep down what's in the lip ; sae I commit the youngster to your hands : not wi' thae tawse in them though ; make him half as gude a scholar as you are yourself, and then he may brag the barony ;—keeping off Father Borthwick, who, I hear, is just a dungeon o' lear. There now, put the lamb into the fauld, and then we shall talk farther." Morison held by Jeanie's hand, and seemed loath to part. "O, ye want to say something ; weel, what is it ? naebody hears but ourselves."

"If ye gang in by the Elfin-cottage," said he, "gie my two pet thrushes some meat ; I neglected them in my haste ; and tell my mother no be feared for me, nor grieve when she's by herself, nor sing sad songs ony mair."

To do all this Jeanie promised, more with looks than words, for the feeling of the boy affected her.

The dominie put the lamb into his fold, amid the questioning looks and titter of his scholars, and returned to Miss Jean Rabson, as he loved to call her.

"Now, Maister John," said Jeanie, "I see ye scarcely ken that boy ; its Morison Roldan ; I love him like a drap of my ain blude, and he's the son of mickle sorrow, and, I maun say't, shame, for his mither was, ay, and is, bonnie Mary Morison, and his father—I winna gie him the name he deserves, but the ane he gets, Lord Roldan."

"Ay, a papist and a malignant," said the dominie ; "a wicked, witty man, and of a bold race, and bloody."

"Weel, then," said Jeanie, "there's the greater need to mind this boy, for he is a Roldan, every inch of him. Now ye maun keep the boys frae nicknaming him, first for his ain sake, and secondly for theirs, for he's like a flaff of fire with thunder at the back on't ; I trow he'll sort them ; there'll be bloody noses amang them, as sure as ye are John Milligan and I am Jean Rabson."

"The bairn shall be attended to, and dutifully nurtured ; I will hold my hands about him, assuredly. But ye love to name yere maiden name, Miss Jean : see ! I have got a good school, and a good dwelling-house, with a fair garden ; will ye no be prevailed upon to change yere name, and be mistress of the same ? It's no just sae gude as to be wife of a minister, Jeanie, but it's respectable, and it's a post of God's enjoining ; O that ye would but think so !"

"Hout, Maister John, it's better than to be a preacher on the mountain-tops ; wha wad be spouse, think ye, to a wandering Cameronian, who sang psalms to-day at the foot of Queensbury, to-morrow at the hip of Criffel, and on the third day was at Banff. Be gude to this bairn o' mine ; watch over him, as if he were yere right ee ; and come once a

week, if ye can, to Howeboddom, to tell us about it; and then, if it be written that I am to be mistress here, nae doubt it will be fulfilled; but godsake, Maister John, quat my hand, somebody will see! There's Kate Wilson looking."

The dominie dropped her hand as if it had been redhot iron, and in a moment was at his task in the school. The loud sound of learning—for lessons were learned audibly—then recommenced, and Jeanie turned her face to the Elfin-glen, muttering, as she went along, "I couldna marry Dominie Milligan, were I to die for refusing him. And yet I canna tell what ails me at him. If it be written that I am to be his wife, nae doubt, as I said, it will be fulfilled; but the dominie, wi' a' his lear, will look lang before he finds it written; unless it be in Chaldaic or Sclavonic:" and she smiled at the conceit.

When Jeanie reached the Elfin-cot, she found Mary in the garden, deeply discomposed. "Ye always come when I want ye maist," said Mary; "see what I have dug up in Morison's little flower-border; can ye read it and interpret it?"

"Read it!" exclaimed Jeanie; "the blind may read it; it is the handwriting of God; it is the Almighty taking the part of the helpless and the desolate—twenty pieces of round sound red gold. Mary, ye should kneel and thank him. He sent food to Elijah, and two salmon to John Telfer, when he was wading the Dee to steal a sheep for his famishing babes; and he sends red gold to Mary Morison when she is in a weirscales about the education of her dear boy; I can read it weel."

"Jeanie," said she, "ye read it like a friend; but, alas! do you read it right! See here, and here, and here," and she pointed to three distinct footprints in the garden ground. "That is writing I can read; oh! that I had never seen it." She grew pale as the lilies among which she was sitting, her head swam, and her eyes grew dim; yet she did not faint, and was better before Jeanie, who, flying like a bird, brought water from the spring. "It is his footstep," she resumed; "I could know it among ten thousand; and he has put his accursed gold here, that my bairn might find it, and that I might take it without much inquiry, and thus break the solemn, the sanctified vow of my life;" and she wrung her hands, and seemed to reproach them for touching what she so much abhorred.

"Mary," said Jeanie, "let us talk calmly and cautiously about this; but first let me feed my boy Morison's birds—I promised that—poor fallow, he's kind-hearted baith to bird and beast, for these are twa gurlins that he saved fra the gied. Now I have pacified them, poor things, and we are at the fireside; for, d'ye ken, I dislike discussing secrets in the open air; and that reminds me to tell you that Dominie

Milligan will be kind and eyedant about the bairn, by this token, that he offered to make me mistress of his house and kaleyard, and is to come up to Howeboddom to speak about it; sae, ye see, I have a hank owre him—od! he'll make our boy a capital scholar."

"I am thankful. But O, dear, kind, good Jeanie, do tell me what I am to do, now, touching this money."

"Just do naething at all," said her adviser; "why, ye are as afraid of the gold as if it wad bite or sting ye. I'll take the serpent whilk ye dug up to our James; and if he thinks we can use it, and with wisdom on our side gie Morison a lift at college, why then we may do it safely; for he'll advise naught but what's for your good name. Ye ken he aye liked to see ye, and to hear ye speak, Mary; and ance, when ye ca'd me sister in yere daffin, I wish ye had but seen his look when I tauld him. But ye dinna like this, sae let it pass."

"Your brother is a noble creature, and you are his full sister, Jeanie," said Mary, with a composed look; "but, oh! to think that Lord Roldan should, in the mirkness of the night ance mair, lay his snares for the helpless, sticks in my heart, and I canna forget it."

Jeanie rose, and then sat; rose again, went to the door, looked east, west, north, and south; then returning, sat down, and said, with a low, earnest voice,—“There's not a soul coming! Now, Mary, did ye no ken that Lord Roldan has oftener than either ance or twice walked round the Elfin-cottage, up the Elfin-glen, and through the Elfin-cavern, like a troubled ghost, at the hollow hour of midnight? He has been seen, and that by ane who never deceived either me or anybody else, gaun daunering and loitering—tarrying by this bower, lingering by that rock, and looking like a spirit charmed by some strong enchantment. Mary, did ye no ken of this?”

"If ye believe I did, Jeanie Rabson," replied Mary, "then I'll say nae mair, but from this hour-henceforth live on my own thoughts, commune with no one, but suspect all human kind."

"No, Mary, I dinna believe the tale; had I believed it, I kenna what I would have done: for the arms of that boy Morison are kinched round my very heart. I dinna believe it, but all other folk believe it, save our James and me; I have heard them dilate on it, Mary, lass, and gie every thing a malicious twist, till my fingers langed to gie their necks a thraving. It was but yestern, nae farther gane, that that bottled-up snake—I dinna remember her name—my lady's attendant, Sour Plooms—ye ken her weel enough—said, in my hearing, that Madam Prudence, of the Elfin-glen, was na sae prudent as some folk thought, and that the footsteps

that were seen in the snow seven long years ago were to be seen among the dew of the place still."

"I was ignorant of all," replied Mary, "and wish I had remained so. But what is this!"

The object which occasioned this exclamation was no other than Dominie Milligan, marching towards the glen at the head of his scholars—a band not at all numerous; for on the first day of the school they did not exceed a score and a half. He halted them by the side of the stream; he then conducted them among the hazel-bushes, where flowers and herbs grew thick and rank, and pausing at Mary's garden, appeared to direct their attention to the neat flower-beds, the rows of herbs, and the fruit-trees, which at once performed the part of hedge and orchard. What all this could mean Jeanie could not imagine; but, accompanied by Mary, she went forth to the dominie. He was not slow in stating the object of his visit.

"These are my bairns," said he, "whom Providence has sent me to instruct, and this beautiful glen is my school in which they will learn a lesson. It is true that I have a place with a slated roof and with seats of deal, where my children study the scriptures and wise books written by pious men: but God never intended that we should ponder only on his written word; hath he not set lessons to us on every hill, and in every vale; on every tree and in every stream! All creation is a sacred volume—a vast Bible—and yon sun, and the light of reason in our minds, are the candles by which we read and interpret it. A book is but a dead letter till we compare it with the living and breathing world. Seek for God, therefore, in the flowers of the field, the fish of the stream, the fowls of the air, and the clouds which pass over heaven. Read much and know little—read little and know less. Do ^{not} speak riddles! I thus explain them: He who reads much will not have leisure to study living nature, and must therefore see through the eyes of others; he who reads little, and studies not the breathing earth around him, will know next to nothing; but he who knows most is the man that reads books and the animated page of creation time and time about, compares the one with the other, and forms his own conclusions. To know books only, is to look at a gum-flower instead of a balmy rose: to admire the painted water of the stage, and slight that silver stream before you, in which the spotted trouts dart to and fro, and which sings and freshens the land as it flows. No, my children, I shall not do you the injustice to keep you from contemplating God in his works. I shall lead you often forth, and explain to you the seasons as they come, with all that comes in their train; the flowers with their beauty, the herbs with their qualities, the masonry of the birds and bees, and the toil of the farmer.

who, in his labours, walks hand in hand with God, and fulfils his purposes and intentions."

"I shall be tempted to become a scholar, too," said Jeanie. "He's a wonderfu' man, this Dominie Milligan."

CHAPTER V.

"His daring hope no sire's example bounds,
His first-born fight no prejudice confounds."

SAVAGE.

DOMINIE MILLIGAN was an enthusiast, and readily communicated, like fire touching tinder, his own spirit, to such of his scholars as were at all mentally gifted: they grappled with the severest tasks, and mastered the longest lessons, not because it was the pleasure of the master, but from being delightful to themselves. How his eye brightened, and how his heart expanded, and how the mercury of his enthusiasm rose over a lad of spirit and promise; nor was he slack in discovering fit recruits for what he called his grenadiers; he watched on all the effect of his favourite passages of scripture or poesy, and, as they were affected, he drew conclusions regarding their sensibility and fancy. He was, however, the worst of all possible masters for the inapt and the dull; he made what he called an onset on them, by both sap and storm; and when he found that he had not the art to rouse them, he gave up the attack. He delighted to see them puzzled and perplexed by the commonest questions; he would clap them on the head, and say, "Clever fellow! what a fine head; 'tis as hard as a millstone, and as thick as a bombshell; I marvel that hair has grown upon it; you will be driving the dung-cart when lads like Morison there will be riding in a coach and six."

Such sentiments and discipline were not at all acceptable to children that happened to be slow and sluggish; but they were welcome to all of active minds and quick apprehensions; the barony was therefore divided on his merits, and Dominie Milligan, while he was caressed by one family, ran a risk of being stoned by another.

A deputation of the heads of families of the satisfied and the aggrieved visited him on the third month of his ministration, regarding the mysterious rules of instruction. He heard them lay down the law, that a master should be alike kind and anxious about all; that he should restrain the too impetuous; urge—one of them said, "flog up the sluggish; and thus have all bright, like halfpence worn in the pocket, and shining through frequent handling."

The dominie looked on all this as heresy; he turned up the whites of his eyes; a little wart on his right eyelid became agitated, and he exclaimed, "Are ye wiser than the Most High? Has he not made some bright and some dull? and who can, by polishing, turn a gray granite stone into a shining diamond. To the quick and the clever, the doors of ambition are opened wide; learning lends them wings to rise, and they rise, and lighten the land around like new-created stars. To the dull and the leaden-headed all ways are closed save the way to the dunghill; the little learning which is forced upon them becomes as wings of lead, and the only light which they follow is that of the will-o'-wisp, to drown them in a puddle, for they have not the sense to creep out of a spoonful of water."

The deputation departed, one half of them saying the master was a born fool, a predestined gomerai; the other, that he was a wonderful being, a miracle of learning, and was just the very man for making ministers for the pulpit. The dominie nevertheless sometimes erred in his estimates of intellect. On the same day that Morison Roldan joined the school, a clouterly boy, some year and a half older, the son of a shepherd, and by name David Gellock, was admitted. Morison soon climbed to the top of the class, and though he was now and then trapped down, he quickly regained his place. Not so honest Davie; he was placed low at first, and instead of rising, dropped down and down, till he was foot all but one—for a boy, to whom Providence had given such intense obtuseness of intellect that he went by the name of the Millstone-head, held, as by right of inheritance, the place of dult. Davie's descent in the class at length incensed the dominie so much, that he placed him on that unwelcome eminence, the repentance-stool, and gave him a hard lesson to learn;—he occupied the seat for some three minutes, and put on an aspect as hard as flint, but it would not do—he burst into tears, sprang to the floor, and saying, with a violent sob, "O! Morison, man, speak for me!" doggedly resumed his former seat in the class. Morison looked at the dominie, and would fain have spoken.

"Ye need not speak, boy, your look's enough," said the master; "there are sparkles of fire in that moorland flint, but it must be stricken hard. Go on with your class, David; you may ride on a horse yet, but never in a chariot, unless Morison will take ye into his."

In Morison the dominie found a scholar to his mind: he learned all the school-lessons, and longed for more; every new book opened up fresh sources of knowledge; he read history, he talked history, and, as his mother said, he dreamed history. Poetry next spread out its charms: he could not, indeed, endure it at first; but rather marvelled what kind of strange composition it was. Accident threw in his

way a black-letter folio, full of our old rhymed romances: their chivalry bewitched him; he did not, indeed, much admire the encounters with giants and hippogriffs; but all deeds of daring were acceptable to his heart; and he could repeat Sir Eger, Sir Graham, and Sir Gray Steel, from end to end—and was inclined to do so when some of his audience did any thing but wish it. But he did not linger among the scenes of history, and lily-beds of song, to the neglect of other duties; he wrought his way through all the rules of arithmetic with little pleasure, but with great rapidity. Mathematics seemed thistly at first; but when he discovered how much they aided accuracy of thought, and how necessary they were in the movements and combinations of war, he gave up his heart and head to them, and soon overtook the knowledge of his master.

Morison did not, however, reach the head of the classes in the school for a season or two; nor did he attain such honours without sharp contests, nor enjoy them without labour and toil. We do not mean that he had to maintain his ascendancy by study and quickness of parts alone; no! he was obliged to vindicate his right to be dux by strength of arm and courage out of school: and in this he found a faithful auxiliary in Davie Gellock. Those who had lost stations in the class were sometimes willing to show that their arms were more powerful than their intellects, and desirous of satisfying Morison that he was not superior in all things. Davie scarcely waited for the commencement of hostilities; he owed Morison the value of many a hard lesson, and longed for the hour of repayment; nay, ventured sometimes to anticipate his friend, and once or twice had all but to fight Morison for presuming to meddle with his prey. Strange books, bloody noses, and torn coats, were three things common to the Elfin-cottage; and had not Jeanie Rabson taken Morison's part on more occasions than one, he would have tasted the rebuke of both his mother's hand and tongue. When, indeed, any thing disastrous befell him, he made his way to Howeboddum; and Jean's skill with the needle, or soothingness of tongue, was alike useful in his cause. "O Mary, woman," was her wonted song, "ye have muckle reason to be proud; he's a grand creature, this Morison of ours! I could beg my bread with the bairn, I love him sae weel. He'll be a shining light yet. Hout! tell nae me about his plays and pranks: wad ye hae him to sit like a sautpowk, ay, at the ingle side! I never saw ony gude come o' a fusionless sumph."

But there were others who refused to look on the pranks, and talents, and the scholarship of Morison with the kindly eyes of Jeanie Rabson.—Some accused his mother of a design to raise her love-begot laddie owre the heads of those who came regularly to the world, under the sanction of the

kirk, and in the terms of an act of parliament. Nay, one or two scrupled not to attribute not a little blame to Providence, for having done more for Morison, in the way of good looks and gifts of mind, than he had done for the sons of dounce folk, who read the scriptures regularly, dozed in the pews on Sunday, and served him in the strict legal meaning of devotion. We have no wish to say what half the vale and much of the upland said; because a spiteful satirist imputes envy to the virtuous when they rail, and it is impossible that such antiquated spinsters as Nickie Neeson, and Sour Plooms, and Jane Juniper of the Halliday Mill could envy Mary in the gladness of having such a son; or they were too strict and heedful in the ways in which they walked to seek an honour which involved a fault.

There were others who, in indulging the same amiable feeling, went a cannier way to work: they acknowledged that Morison was "baith gude and clever; but then see what his mother, poor foolish creature, was bringing the boddie to! No content that he should crest it up wi' the best born, in suits of green, and ruffles, and such like faldeels—just as if his father had asked the kirk's leave when he begat him—but she maun have him to speak Latin words and Greeks, and blauds o' poetry, as if he were parson and actor baith in a breath; and then that half-demented die, Dominie Milligan, keeps up the delusion, and—would believe it!—says that Morison Roldan kens mair at four than some ken at four-and-twenty."—"I wonder to see ye make sae mickle about a rumlegarie, light-headed, fleck of a lad like that," said John Howet of Hurley-rigg. "He's a born fool: ae hour ye'll hear him raving till he's urse, clean off-loof nonsense of his ain; another hour ye'll see him drawing daft-like lines on the linn sands, whilk he calls his battle-plans and his mathematical modes of taking forts: but bide a wee! afore ye hae well done marvelling at the nonsense of the thing, ye'll hear a shout whilk ye wad think came frae the plover or the curlew, and wha is it but gowk callant, sitting on the tapmost stane of Glengarrick auld tower, where never a ane dare venture, save the hawk and himself. The boy's fairly moidert and win-skewed wi' reading fule books—I wad speak to the mither o' him, but I am no just sure that a man who looks to be older will help on his ain preferment by being seen hand glove wi' ane that was ance loose, and may never mair tucker."

It is likely that some such thoughts as those expressed by Hurley-rigg had crossed the mind of Mary Morison; for the very first half-holyday which the school afforded, her son had brought all his books from the classes, and had gone away to help honest Davie to rob a hunting-bird's nest in the old tower of Glengarrick, she summon-

ed Jeanie Rabson, and declared her determination to hold an inquest on the books which were, she feared, robbing her bairn of his wits. Jeanie assented to be one of the judges, and, just as they were commencing the task, they were joined by Nanse Halberson. She was invited to become a critic; and the three laid their heads together to separate the righteous volumes from the unrighteous, and leave no book on Morison's shelves capable of leading him like a will-o'-wisp into the mire of verse, or of "filling his noddle," as Jeanie Rabson said, "wi' the idea of becoming a Sir William Wallace, or a Black Douglas, or waur than a Sir Gray Steel—what Steels could he be of—the Steels of Steelston are a waufrace, and the Steels of Skinanbirm are little better."

Each of the three judges, like the editors of three critical reviews in these our latter days, when some new poet or other perplexes them by deviating into originality from the beaten path of opinion, sought to justify herself from any share in the imputed error. "I have been watchful of the boy," said Mary; "and all the books which I allowed him to look at besides the Bible were the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe*."—"And I," said Jeanie Rabson, "gave him *The Afflicted Man's Best Companion*, and the *Letters of that sound divine Rutherford*, whilk are like flowers, and contain honey for the wild bee as well as for the tame."—"And I," quoth Nanse Halberson, "gied him that graceful pastoral, *The Gentle Shepherd*;—a volume of gude auld Scottish sangs, whilk our douce grandmothers sang; by and attour a mickle black book, fu' o' blacker print and romantic stories—no printed to mislead, but to amuse and shorten a lang darksome night."—"I have my own doubts about the latter book," said Mary; "but let us look into them one by one. There's a volume to you, Nanse, there's another to you, Jeanie, and I'll dip into this one myself."

Jeanie Rabson spoke first: "This," said she, "maun be a book of verse, for the lines are short and long, and ragged at the end, like a beggar's blanket; it is called *The Cherrie and the Slae*: it's a lang dreigh story; the sweet cherrie is sin, and the sour slae virtue—a capital thing for *Madam Sour Plooms*, up bye yonder. But oh! to read through it for the sake of three lines of moral, is like climbing a tree seven miles high for the sake of ae apple. Ye needna dread this book; it will do naebody ony harm."

"I canna just say sae mickle for my ane, then," said Mary; "but the gude rule at ae end is a set-off against the misrule at the other. Here's sic a scene o' daffin, and dauncing, and drinking as I never read the like o'; and then the painting of the hale is as bright as sunshine, and the language seems as if it were dancing to a tune. *Christ's Kirk on the Green* is the name o't; and the other is called *The Gude-*

wife of Auchtermuchty; there's right domestic discipline in it; and then the moral and the drolling rin hand in hand, and reel and set to ane anither. The bairn maun have laughed loudly at this: I trow he could take nae skaith frae sic compositions."

"And mine," said Nanse Halberson, "is a sanctified work: Rutherford's Letters, nae less. Ye have nae idea how warmly the reader is called on to caress the kirk; to take her round the neck, and salute her, and touzle her weel for salvation's sake."

"O Nanse," said Jeanie, "ye're a queer expositor of types and symbols: but I'm thinking I had better tak the book hame wi' me; young blood and ignorant eyes are apt to make mistakes, and think the good divine is talking of less sanctified things than kirks and synods."

While these three female judges are busy with the little library, giving one volume to honour and another to dishonour, let us follow Morison and Davie to what we may call the adventure of the hawk; seeing that this tyrant of the air had constructed her chamber, and reared her young, in a situation so lofty and perilous that no one had hitherto succeeded in climbing to her eyry. An old tower, called the Peel of Glengarnock, overlooked the bay: it was square, with a ditch and fence-wall, and considered impregnable, till a feud with the house of Maxwell brought two thousand warriors against it, who made it a habitation for ravens and owls. The turret stair was broken close by the wall, the vaulted floors were gone, and nothing stood save a ragged skeleton, in the most tottering part of which a hunting-hawk had her nest, with four young ones, fledged, and all but fit for flight.

Morison had something like a dawning notion that he was connected with the owner of the ruined tower, and the estate whereon it stood; but his birth and relationship were matters shunned by his mother and avoided by Jeanie Halberson; so much so that he hardly knew that a stain was on his birth, or that the word bastard had an insulting meaning. The unwelcome feeling occasionally intruded itself that his mother had not the same station in the world as other dames who had children; and once, in real simplicity of soul, he sent the colour from her cheek by inquiring what kind of child a natural child was.

His schoolfellows, with most of whom he was a favourite, were unacquainted with the refined systems of annoyance practised in more lordly seminaries: they were sons of shepherds or of ploughmen, with whom the bar sinister was scarcely a blot. A lame foot, a hand with three fingers, or a squint, were objects rather of kindness than of scorn: and Morison had yet to learn that the laws of man, though not of nature, interfered between him and a wide inherit-

ance. The two adventurers soon reached the ruin, ascended with the lightness of winged creatures the jagged and ragged wall, and gained the foot of the central tower, which, rising to the height of thirty feet above the parapets, overlooked the country for many miles.

But at the foot of the central tower Davie's courage failed; he had never before been so high in the air, and as he looked on the rolling sea and on the daisied sod, some sixty feet beneath, he wished himself safely down, and declared that he had not a head that would carry him further. He therefore descended, and awaited below the return of Morison from the falcon tower, as it was called, in allusion to its tenant. The dizzy summit was soon scaled, and, with a couple of young hunting-hawks secured in his cap, he began to descend on the other side from that on which he had ascended, for the purpose of examining the ruin. He now remembered that in country story the falcon tower was haunted; lights had been seen there at night; some had heard sounds, and one even swore to the waving of a hand, and the glance of a robe of scarlet. A narrow aperture, in which an oak door still kept its hinges, led into it; Morison pushed it up and entered:—

He started back, and his first emotion was to fly, for there, on a stone seat, like a watcher of old, and leaning on a table, sat a handsome man, with books open before him, and a brace of pistols richly inlaid and shining in their polish. He gazed on Morison, and said sharply, "How dare you climb here and rob my hawk-nests!"

"I have harried the hawk's nest," answered Morison, "because the old one—I know her by her blue wings—killed my mother's hen-birds; and, maybe, I have another reason."

"Let me hear reason the second," said the stranger, looking at the youth as if he would have looked him through.

"Ou just," replied he, "because the young laird of Knockhoolie said I durst na do't; but I'll put the birds into the nest again if ye like, for it would be a pity to rob them of their mother's bosom and warm wing, and their free course in the air."

Morison was about to reascend the turret, when the stranger stopped him and said, "Nay, my boy, that would peril thy bones twice; I shall tame one of these hawks for thee. What! you object to that? Well, what is it you wish?"

"If you tame one for me," said Morison, "you must let me give it to Davie Gellock, for I promised him one if he would accompany me to the tower."

"And where is this friend of thine?" inquired the stranger.

"He is at hand," said Morison; but, on looking for him,

he was nowhere to be seen. He called his name once—twice—thrice, till the ruin rang again, but Davie did not make his appearance. "Oh, he will have fallen and killed himself!" exclaimed the other: "and what will his father say, and what shall I say to my mother?" and he sprang towards the shattered staircase, and down he went with the quickness of a cat. When he reached the ground, the stranger was there before him. How he descended Morison had no time to inquire; for a scream, wild and fearful, was uttered by Davie, who, starting from among the shattered arches, fled with the speed of a hunted deer, and was out of sight in a moment.

"He takes you, sir," said Morison, "for a ghost or araith, which they say haunts this old tower, and he will unhome and tell that I am taken and torn to pieces."

"And what do you take me for?" said the stranger, with lowering look. "You saw that I did not follow you, and yet I reached the ground before you."

"You are no ghost, for all that," said Morison, "though, as I seen you at night, up in yon howlet-room, I shouldnae ave known what to say. You are a man. I have read that whoso is more than man is a god; but ye are nae god—your feet sound as you walk; you nearly fell over that one."

"You are a strange boy," said the querist; "what is your me, and who are your parents?"

"My name is Morison Roldan, and my mother lives in the Elfin-glen."

The stranger turned his head away, and remained silent a little while. "The Elfin-glen!" he muttered to himself; "well I know its romantic caverns and its flowery nooks, and often do I see it when the moon and stars light me. Tell me, boy," he said aloud, "do you know the Elfin-cave, with the little spring well in the corner, and garlands of reysuckle hung at the entrance?"

"Oh yes! I go there once a year with my mother;—it is in the autumn season: she grows sad and seems ill about nothing; but after she has sat a while looking at one place in the cavern, and praying in another, and muttering the name of some one, she grows more composed, and returns home. She will tell me, she says, the story of the cavern some time. I am glad that she refuses to tell me now."

"Why so?" inquired the stranger.

"Because," said Morison, "I am but a boy, and there will be some wrong to right. But I maun go home, for my mother Rabson, of Howeboddum, will be there, and I maun see her, for she is like anither mither to me."

The stranger whistled twice: two lackeys made their appearance. "Here," said he; "rear and train these hawks;

three are from the falcon tower; one of them is for this

youth." They took the hawks and vanished. "Here, child," he continued, "take this purse; and when any one asks you where you got it, say the man of the haunted tower gave it to you: I shall see thee soon again." He turned round as he spoke; and Morison, rejoicing at his release, imitated Davie, and bounded off, but more in gladness than in fear; for there was something in the look and voice of the stranger which filled his mind, and allowed him to think of nothing else till he reached the entrance of the Elfin-glen.

"Hilloa! Morison," shouted Davie Gellock; "what a wonderful deliverance! They'll look wi' clear een that will catch me hunting for hawks about haunted towers again. What a mercy that it didna confine ye in the turret, and keep ye there to feed the hawks wi'!"

"And do ye think," inquired Morison, "that it was na flesh and blood?"

"Flesh and blood!" exclaimed Davie; "when could flesh and blood flee down seventy feet perpendicular as he did, and rise without sair banes? He was a gruesome ghaist, wi' hair like a heather cove, and tusks like the linchpins o' a cart."

Ere they arrived at the Elfin-cottage, the inquest on Morison's little library closed in these words. "Here's a book," said Jeanie Rabson, "that we had nearly overlooked; its *The Seasons*, by James Thomson; and tells us that there are flowers in spring, sunshine in summer, corn in harvest, and snow in winter; nevertheless, there is a wonderful beauty of expression about it; but he has tried to relate the blessed story of Ruth, and failed for lack of memory."

"Weel, ye see," said Nanse, "the bairn is a wise bairn after all; and saving Peden's Prophecies, which are nonsense, and Satan's Invisible World Discovered, which is lies, and Gulliver's Travels, which are baith, his books are a' gude books; but as for these three, spare them not, say I."

"And I am of the same opinion," said Jeanie; "but I wad add Valentine and Orson, Sir Eger, Sir Graham, and Sir Gray Steel; True Thomas, and the Queen of Elfland, and all the race of wild tales, to the number: if they are true, they are sae marvellous as to form nae example; and if they are lies, they are sic unlikely anes that they should be burnt. But Mary, lass, the sun is going down, and I maun hame to the kye." On this she left the cottage, accompanied by Nanse Halberson.

Morison found his mother replacing the books in his little chamber. "Bless thee! my son," said Mary, "what ails thee! Come in and sit down, and tell me all what has happened—ye look as if ye had conversed with a ghaist."

"That's what Davie says," answered Morison: "but when was a ghost visible in daylight; and what ghost ever carried a brace of silver-mounted pistols; and what ghost ever

reads a book; and, more than that, did ye ever hear of ghost that had gold in his waistcoat-pocket? Even Nanse Halberson, that kens a' the ghost stories, has na a tale like that."

"And wha," said Davie, "ever heard of human flesh and blood dwelling in the topmost pinnacle of Glengarnock Peel; of human flesh and blood that could flee down through the air, like a robin-redbreast, seventy feet, if it's an inch, and light on its ain feet; and when did aught of this world glowre wi' twa saucer een, and laugh wi' teeth like tether takes?"

"Saucer een and teeth like tether stakes!" exclaimed Morison; "I was face to face wi' him, and ought to ken he was a very handsome man, about the age of my mother; and though he came down from the falcon tower faster than came, I bethink me now that I heard the sound of descending feet in the heart of the wall near me. He kens all about our glen here, and asked me about the Elfin-cavern, where my mother likes to sit for hours and hours together."

"Weel, weel, keep your ain opinion, and I'll keep mine," said Davie, stoutly; "but I'll off hame before dark." And away he started; turning now and then to look back at the vaulted tower, which rose gray and grim in the distance.

Mary Morison rose and looked out on the vale; she then opened the door of the chamber, and with tottering knees, and a face cold and colourless as marble, said, "Have ye heard me all, Morison, my bairn?"

"No, mother," answered the youth; "but it's soon told." He then related his interview with the stranger, the words that passed between them, and described his appearance.

"Be mair particular wi' the stranger's looks," said Mary; "for mickle depends on it."

"He was of the middle size and mair; his een were deep and dark; his brow high and clear; his colour paler than common; and, when he spoke, he lisped a little."

"It's he! 'tis he himself," said Mary; "these are true tokens; and then his complexion—it was one of the brightest; foreign suns and foreign follies will stain the purest red white. What said he about the Elfin-cavern; d'ye remember his very words?"

"He asked me if I knew it, and had observed its little nook, and the summer garlands at the entrance; and he uttered something about kenning it weel, and visiting it when naething sees him save the moon and stars."

"He hid her face in her hands, but the tears, large and hot, fell fast through between her fingers. "I winna let thee enter and charm my soul again," said she, recovering herself; "he forsook me, and when he word that is registered baith aboon and below, and which earth demanded, he have cleared me with the world and done justice—"

justice to thee, my helpless boy—he refused to speak that word—that little word—”

“When I am a man I will make him speak it, mother!” said Morison, “though it should peril my heart’s blood.”

Mary rose from her seat, opened the chamber window, allowing the summer air, mingled with the light of the descending sun, to stream freely and refreshingly in, and shedding back the thick shining hair from the forehead and temples of her boy, over which it wandered disordered, she said, “Alas, my child, ye will but augment the misery which ye desire to lessen: I seek avengement at no one’s hand, and least of all at thine; and have I not my revenge? Am I not happy and prosperous? Is not my son not only the first in all things—looks as well as mind, but does he not promise to take rank among the wise, the pious, and the eloquent? Look at him who wronged us—is he not unhappy? Does he not seek in far foreign lands for the peace denied him by his follies in this; and does he not hurry home again for the peace he is denied abroad? I am avenged, ay, more than I desired.”

“Mother, mother!” said Morison, “of whom speak you? he whom I saw in the old tower I never beheld before—he is a stranger; of whom do you speak?”

Mary took down her Bible, and turning to the title-leaf, pointed to the blank in the entry of her son’s birth—“My child,” she said, “you once asked me whose name should fill that space—bring me pen and ink.” She took the pen, and after “Morison, son of Mary Morison,” wrote calmly, and in a beautiful hand—“Lord Roldan.”

“And, mother, is Lord Roldan my father?” inquired Morison.

“He is,” exclaimed Lord Roldan, opening the door of the chamber, “he is, and is come to say so—would that he had done so sooner.”

Mary, who had started at first, and made a step as if she would have fled, looked on him, and said, “Have you yet more to say?”

“Yes, Mary, much:—I have to ask forgiveness of thee for the manifold injuries I have done, and to bid thee be happy; come with me to another land—come where there are no bigoted mothers, and contemptible etiquette, to which, as to an idol, I must bow here. Come, and a life devoted to thee and thine shall show the world that Lord Roldan is not unworthy of his first and only love.”

“I have heard something like all this from you before, my lord,” said Mary; “but speak plainly; the way which I must go now lies through the church, when the minister of God is there! Lord Roldan knows whether that is the way he means or no.”

His lordship was silent for a moment. “Mary,” he said,

"are we never to understand each other! Am I doomed to wither away like a flower half cut by the mower and drooping to the sun! Am I doomed to print my footsteps round the house of her whom I love when all are asleep, and to meet with no requital? Mary, if you were to see me sitting or hours at midnight in that lonesome cavern, living over again hours of departed love, and imagining in every wave of the honeysuckle garlands at the entrance, and in every sweet sound, that I hear your coming footsteps, and see your form—sylph-like, and even in its shadow beautiful—you would pity me, nor refuse the request of one who will not believe that he is not yet dear to you."

"My lord," replied Mary, with a voice that had lost all its agitation, "you are but wasting words, and hindering me from working. I have a task to perform—a task needful at least for the support of my son and myself, and now performed as a duty, that I may fulfil the high purposes for which I am educating him. Be so good as retire, therefore; it is sufficient that I have taken my resolution."

"And I have taken mine," replied Lord Roldan: "here I bide till you consent to go with me—my ship sails to-morrow. Come, come, Mary," he said, in a more indifferent tone, "do not queen it too much; we were acquainted in other days, you know. Yon cavern has its love-legends as well as its goblin tales: you did not always look so scornful of me." And he sat down suddenly, and seemed disposed to remain.

"My lord," said Mary, "you desire me not to queen it too much. Queen it! I ought to fall on my knees, and ask assistance from God against a demon! You broke every vow, they were many; you broke every oath, and you know they were numerous; you withheld or destroyed all testimony to my honour—nay, you refused even to own that young boy, but left him to the mercy of a wintry world, the support of a helpless mother! I thought you had remedied up the whole evil you intended to do me in those earlier deeds: but no—experience has increased your powers of mischief, and lo! you are here to insult me with your empty love, and give the world cause to suspect the sincerity of my repentance. I bid you begone, my lord: bid me not too far."

"There is very ruddy blood in thy veins, Mary; still it is a hurl's blood, and these tragic airs do not become thee—what means the boy?"

He said this, Morison, who had hitherto stood gazing, moment on Lord Roldan, then on his mother, and wondering what all this mystical language meant, dashed down a curse of gold which he had received at the feet of Lord Roldan, saying, "Take it back! no good can come from it. Ay, mother, dinna mind that insulting man; I will never

ask for a father again. No one shall be a father to me that gars you greet."

"O, my ain, my dear-bought bairn!" said Mary, clasping him to her bosom; "I did a sinful deed in other days, and oh! I have done one of folly to-day. No sooner did I write down 'Lord Roldan' in my blessed father's Bible, than, as if it had been a spell, it raised a demon—lo! there he sits mocking and insulting me."

"Beware!" said his lordship, in a low, hollow voice; "the demon of whom you speak can act as well as look."

"Alas! I know it, my lord," replied Mary; "but even against that I am not unprovided: the blood of Halbert Morison is in my veins." She put her hand into her bosom. "I have at least one faithful friend in the world who will take my part and require small persuasion." Something glittered in her hand as she spoke.

"Mother, mother," said Morison, "it is loaded with ball!—I examined it last night."

"And hast thou seen thy mother's friend, my boy! For these fourteen melancholy years it has lain, I may say, in my bosom, and been my protector. See! is it not a neat and handsome thing!—one touch of my finger, and he who is come to insult me would do so no more."

Lord Roldan rose and said, "By the light of heaven! I would give half my land wert thou but of gentle blood. Now some dames would have screamed—some would have fainted—and some would have done I dare not well say what, had they been in thy place, Mary: but Mary—my Mary of the Elfin-cave!—neither screamed nor fainted, but out she plucks what she calls her bosom friend, even a loaded pistol, and informs me that she stands protected. It was done with so natural an air, too! no earl's daughter could have done it with so much majesty. Farewell for a while, Mary! it is lucky, after all, that two such spirits cannot be together."

"I will not always be a boy, sir," said Morison, touched by words half sarcastic.

Lord Roldan went away, and the mother and son were left alone to think of what had passed. Morison lay and sobbed in her bosom; at last he exclaimed, "It is better as it is: why should I want a father when I have such a mother! I have read of wondrous things done by desolate children; and I feel that God has more for me to do in the world than to sit and wring my hands, and lament that I have not a father. Mother, I ken now what Will Lorburne meant when he called me bastard: I didna laugh, nor yet did I cry, but all the boys looked at me, and I looked at them. I wonder if he will call me that again!" And he clinched his hands, and his eyes lightened.

CHAPTER VI.

"As bleak-faced Hallowmass returns,
 They get the jovial ranting kiras;
 When rural life, in every station,
 Unite in common recreation;
 Love blinks, wit slips, and social mirth
 Forgets there's care upon the earth."

BURNS.

A few days after the events related in our last chapter, Lord Roldan's barge, with all its sails set, and the banner of its house flying, sailed out of the bay of Glengarnock, and bore his lordship away to foreign parts; there to do—so Murr said—much that was evil and little that was good. "But I wadna hae onybody to be owre sure that Lord Roldan's gane," said that district authority Nickie Neevin; "he will come back the first high wind, or the first under-shower, as a' the name come to the world; and, speaking o' names, has na he as gude as owne Mary Morison's bairn. My certie, kimmer will look owre her nose at a' now! she was high enough before wi' what Dominie Igan, the demented bodie, calls Morison's gifts—I wish y were but graces—the country winna contain her." The prophecy of Nickie, like the prophecies of more renowned names in these our latter days of foreknowledge, was not soon fulfilled: high winds and loud thunder-storms came in their time; the seasons also revolved; nay, years rolled by, and yet no one saw the much-looked-for barge return to the bay; nor did the pride of Mary Morison increase.

These were times of happiness and peace to Mary and her son: the former augmented her stock of household goods; her webs of fine linen, bleached among the gowans of the Elfin-burn bank, grew numerous; so did her pieces of grey-woolsey; nay, she procured the finest wool, and, exercising her skill, spun it fine and evenly, and had it woven in the Cameronian loom of James Macgee, and died a sea-blue colour in the vats of Deacon Mitchelson, and all with the hope of rivalling the beauteous manufactures of the East: her money, too, actively won and prudently hoarded, increased fourfold; and, through the agency of Jeanie Rabbit, it was laid safely out at interest, "so that, Mary, when," said her friend, "ye may sometimes sit idle, for the fowd is working while ye are sleeping."

These matters did not grow and prosper more under Mary's hands than Morison increased in beauty and grew in strength under the ministry of time and the tuition of

Dominie Milligan. He was now in his seventeenth year; was tall of his age, well shaped, and active; and had a blow, a smile, a kind word, or a sharp gibe for all, according to their deservings. The opprobrious word *bastard* had involved him in three different contests with boys above his own age; and hard knocks were given and received, in two of which he was victor, and the third was interrupted by Davie Gellock, who, fearful for his friend, interposed by main force, and bestowed with his iron fists such a lesson on the enemy, that the word of shame was silenced in the school and in the field, and Morison reigned king in learning and in courage among the youth of Glengarnock.

"It's no," said one of the unsuccessful champions, "but ane might, in the long run, by stratagem and wile, conquer Morison, for he's a flaff of fire; but then we have to bide the brulzie next wi' that dour deevil, Davie: his flesh is as hard as a reested ham—blood cannas be drawn on't—and then his neeves—I think I feel them hammering under my short rib yet. I wonder what the two boys see in ane another!"

But, as the stature of Morison grew, and his mind expanded, the feeling that he was basely born waxed with his person, and augmented with his mind;—he imagined he read it in every look, and heard it in every greeting. That Lord Roldan had wronged—grievously wronged—his mother, he had learned from both their lips; and reading books both divine and profane, historical and romantic, and conversing with the wise and the learned—for there is no vale in Scotland without its scholar, and no peasant without education—he became acquainted with the reasons of birth and rank which his father—he had never yet called him by that name—assigned for not having made Mary his lady; and though he made allowance for such prejudice, he could not but regard it as shallow, and not founded in nature, and considered himself as a martyr to an etiquette which he regarded as contemptible.

With these uneasy feelings there grew up a resolution to make up for the defect of his birth, by exerting all his faculties to render his name worthy of being remembered when distinguished men were named. How this was to come to pass he had, indeed, no distinct notion: his dreams of ambition, like the figures in real dreams, had assumed no defined shape, and he was blindly groping his way, like Samson, to the columns which sustained rank, without being conscious, that they would be shaken rudely, and that his own hand would be upon them. On looking around, he saw no outlet for his ambition: all the high places of the land were not only filled by men provided expressly by the grace of the throne and by act of parliament for them, but their successors were already intimated by the same legal pro-

ness: it is true that the constitution cried out, My doors are open to all, and no doubt it cried right; but, then, it meant men with money in their pockets: the words were uttered in vain in the ears of the cloutery sons of the husbandman and mechanic. The law, the church, the navy, and the army, were places tabooed by the hand of wealth, and quite inaccessible to poverty; and though thousands were employed by government in its departments, both at home and abroad, it was observed that, by some obliquity of mind, men of genius were not thought fit to labour in the cause of the land which they adorned; but that the dew of preferment fell upon those who could influence elections, and whose hands contributed to keep the wheels of state corruption greased, so that they ran smoothly on the road of public perdition.

The situation, as well as condition of Morison, was unfavourable to his aspirations. His eye was confined by the hills which hemmed in Glengarnock; and though, as Davie Glengarnock hinted, there were very respectable folk, he was not, beyond them, yet how those people were employed, and of the multitudinous labourers of the city, he knew next nothing. Poetry had, indeed, opened her charmed portal, and given him a glimpse of paradise; but of the miracles of pencil and the chisel he was ignorant; of that eloquence which shook the heart while it convinced the mind, he had never read; nor had he more than an undefined notion of the strides which science had taken in its combinations and discoveries. His mother, as we have already intimated, was a vision of a large congregation, animated and kindled by the eloquence of her son from the pulpit: she did not wish a higher elevation, else she would have striven to open his mind to it. The more that Morison read, and saw, and reflected, the less did he relish the eminence to which he desired to raise him: he had too much fire and passion, he already began to fear, to enable him to run a calm career; but he intimated no wish to thwart her, and he had no intention to send him to college in the ensuing season, with something akin to delight.

Minnie Milligan, who had duly rendered an account of Morison's progress in learning to Jeanie Rabson, without making any advances in the affections of the heiress of Glengarnock, concurred fully in Mary's views. "Morison," she said, "is to me a living riddle: he is at once all mischief and meditation; he is at the head of all the merry mischief, they may call it, which a schoolmaster must shut his eyes on: he is likewise at the top of every class wherever sense, and good sense, and talent are wanted. Ye will see him steering the ship in the bay, too, with all the boldness of a sailor—ye will see him mounted on some unbacked colt, scaling the hills of the desert—ye will find him hand and glove

with some wild slip of a lad, just as if they were laying their heads together to rob orchards and sod up chimneys, and then find him in grave converse with douce King Corrie, or John Mackeen, or Andrew Bell, or some other of the natural lights of the parish. And besides, ye see, he has safter inclinations, Jeanie: he is unco fond of laying his cheek close to that of bonnie Mattie Anderson, when he is showing her the meaning of some puzzling word, and the lassie sits quiet with her een downcast."

"Dinna," said Jeanie Rabson, "lay yere cheek to mine, dominie—daft bodie, I am no bonnie Mattie Anderson, nor are ye Morison Roldan."

"Aweel," said the dominie, sitting more perpendicular, "I concur in the motion of sending the young man to college. By the time the sickle is next among the corn, he will be put as far as my humble knowledge can put him, and then he maun go to the city of Edinburgh, and drink at the classic wells of that noble place: look out for some earl's son, who desires to learn his lesson through other men's capacities; and, if he is judicious, and disna fa' in love with ane of his noble scholar's sisters, he may be ablins presented to a kirk, and the dreams of his mother realized."

"And how is he to be provided for at college, dominie?" said Jeanie; "how mickle siller will it take, and, aboon a', will it no be a risk?—He's young and he's handsome, with a wild ee, and wit at will; and then they say that the bonniest lasses in the wide world are to be seen in Enbrugh. I doubt him, dominie, I doubt him."

The dominie looked at Jeanie for a little space, but she saw that his mind was not where his eye was; it had flown to Edinburgh, and there, in a back room, in one of Auld Reekie's uncleanly lanes, called Panton-street, had imagined a half-starved student, with his deal table, his sanded floor, his twopenny pap, and his bottle of three-halfpenny ale; and intrenched him among such reading as few read save those who thirst for knowledge, and drink at all springs.

"Ay, Jeanie," said the dominie, "it will cost much money; fifteen pounds sterling, doubtless, for the season; but then the outlay may be lessened by sending by the carrier baked bread, and dressed linen, and new butter, and ewe-milk cheese: then there will be letters, and books, and pen and ink; for there's no limit to the outlay in learning; and he may get into a house, as I did, where there dwalt three fiddlers, that kept screeving awa at 'Clean pea strae,' 'Nelly Weems,' 'Bab at the Bowster,' and other graceless airs, whilk accorded ill with the character of my studies; for I winna conceal from you, that when I heard the fiddle skirling, and light feet bounding o'er the floor, I felt mair than disposed—ane of the broken remnant as I am—to cast Boston and Harvey, yea, and even Jeremy Taylor himself,

side, and loup, and shuffle, and cut 'Owre the buckle' and the 'Highland-sling' with the merriest of them."

"Ye frighten me, John Milligan," said Jeanie. "Wow! at Edinburgh maun be a gaye and queer place."

"Hou! that's naught, Jeanie woman, for though the reets are filled wi' beauty by day, there is anither class hilk I call beauties of the night, that, like howlets and sic te birds of prey, come out of their hames and houses, and frae ten o'clock till twelve, and sometimes to the short our beyond it, fill the streets wi' heads full of feathers, and trail their syde-tailed gowns after a wanton fashion—d O! only to look at their painted cheeks and curled locks, and bare white arms and insnaring eyes, is an awful thing."

"Heh be't! John Milligan," said Jeanie; "it will be as much as youth can do to eschew those insnarers: but I have the dread of our Morison, though I maun say that his ready cheek by cheek wi' bonnie Mattie Anderson bodes nae bearance that way. But we will watch him at Dalgarrick kirk to-night, when the sound of sweet music, the thrum of harmonious feet, the waving of love-looks, and the mingling of bright een, will be all around him, and he will be able to contain himself. No, dominie, that I am inst saft words atween young folk, or kind looks either; some folk have nae hold of their hand, and make a mid-it tryste o' the matter and a brash of wooing."

The farm of Dalgarrick lay on the seacoast. The last of corn had been secured under a coat of broom from rains and snows of winter; and a festival was announced in which supper was to be prepared for the old, music for the young, and drink for all. It was, in brief, the harvest kirk, and long before Morison arrived the mirth and merriment had commenced. He who brought home the last of grain was accused of the crime of bringing in winnow and pelted with eggs so long as eggs were to be found. Rum in spoonfuls and milk in ladlefuls were liberally served on all who had been employed in the labours of the farm; and, when this pastime ceased, the person who reaped the last handful of grain was brought forward decked with ribands; while a few ears of corn, neatly dressed and braided, were carried as a nosegay under the arm of the kirk. This symbol of plenty was borne on the present occasion by a young woman whose beauty rendered her unfit representative of Ceres, in whose honour antiquaries—who define all that no one else can comprehend—say that the festival of the kirk was instituted.

For some time before Morison—an invited guest—reached Dalgarrick, he was made sensible that mirth and glee were taken up their abode in the farmer's onstead for one night at least. Lights streamed from window and from door; from the barn the sound of minstrelsey and the

bounding of innumerable feet arose, while door and loophole threw far along the valley, and even upon the advancing tide, such gushes of light as startled alike the birds in the bush and the smugglers on the sea. Then the sound would suddenly cease, while those who were nigh might hear the salute of lips, as lads reseated their partners, and the commendations bestowed on those who acquitted themselves best. All at once the music would awaken, and the din of the dance recommence; while coming guests, yet at a distance, hastened their steps, anxious to partake of the joy.

"Take time, lad, and take us wi' you," said a sharp shrill voice to Morison, as, with a light foot and a lighter heart, he was making his way to Dalgarrow.

"Hout! and is this you, lad?" said Nickie Neevison, as he halted and obeyed the summons. "I thought it was auld James Macrabin, the cooper, ye were gaun sae lamely: but just take yere time; it's no ilka hour of the day that ye foregather wi' me. Now Morison, my lad, ye're bonnily drest, and yere looks are no amiss, and yere heart's light, and ye have reason to believe that the night will gang merrily wi' you. But take care: there's some wild young slips of lads at this house the night, that winna endure to be banged baith in Latin and lasses, and there may be draps of blude on that white waistcoat—and it is a braw ane, flowered, I guess, by yere mither's ain hand—draps of blude, I say, before the hour o' midnight."

Morison laughed, and said, "But, Nickie, if any lad chooses to quarrel with me about you, I shall say that ye were giving me good counsel, and that—"

"Ye're a gowk!" exclaimed Nickie, "and ye ken ye are. But what will Will Lorburne of Knockleshang say, think ye, when he sees ye dancing wi' winsome Mattie Anderson? His blude's hot, and his hand's ready. But here's the place, and there they are all on the floor; dinna say that I didna warn ye:" and she held up her forefinger as he entered the place.

"Where have ye been till this hour?" inquired Davie Gellock; "for Jeanie Rabson of Howeboddum has been speering for you; Dominie Milligan marvels what has detained the learned youth, even Morison; and here have I been raxing my neck glowering for ye along the road to the Elfin-glen; and there's Mattie Anderson herself, she'll maybe no tell ye wha she has been langing for every time the door opened. There! ye see she's on the floor wi' young Knockleshang. She sees ye now—she sees ye now! I wadna gie Will Lorburne a single bodle for his chance of her. Morison, there's sundry here who like neither you nor me, and young Knockleshang is one of them. If ye'll just step up and take Mattie Anderson frae him, I'll stand by you against a dozen."

Morison smiled, and walked to the upper end of the place, where several of the graver guests were seated, and entered into discourse with them. He talked so sensibly, and with so much knowledge of crops, and cattle, and seasons, that the goodman of the Foregirth said, "I'll make room for ye here, Morison; it's rare to hear any of the youth of this age know the difference between winter and ware."

The goodwife of the Foregirth interposed with, "Ne'er fash your thumb, gudeman, but steer about the toddy; it's mair natural-like that the lad should be shaking his shanks amang yere ain daughters on the floor, than talking wi' you about cropping and draining, and laying a great louth of beasts on Duncow-craft."

The circulation of the punch, impeded by this conversation, was renewed; and Morison, obeying the hint, led out one of the daughters of the house of Foregirth, and requested to know what tune she desired.

The young woman, Nancie Irving by name, glanced on he querist an eye to which music and dancing gave an increase of lustre, though that was needless, and said she could dance to any tune. The fiddler, a blind old man, but whose sense of hearing was sharpened by the loss, cried, "I'll suit ye, lass; I hear ye, Nancie Irving—but to whom oes that other voice belong? If it were na that they say Lord Roldan is owre the sea, I wad call it his. It is the voice of a Roldan, if ever I heard it in my life."

"Ye are nigh right there," exclaimed young Knocklehang; "the country kens he's the son of that wild lord, though we a' ken that he was na acknowledged. But play p: he's the son of somebody, and that's enough."

"If he's his father's son," muttered the blind musician, your brag will be but short—there now—I kenned it. Where's the case of my breadwinner, for here's a bruilzie!" and he slipped his fiddle into the case, and began to descend from the sackhead on which he sat, in order to escape from the expected strife of fists and flails.

His alarm was needless. It is true that Morison's eye lightened and his face darkened; that he measured the stic bully as if he sought for a place to inflict a blow—ay, stepped half a step forward as if about to give it; but, whatever was passing in his mind, he did no more. "Play p," he said; "will you keep us here all night without music, old man?"

John Aiken, for that was the name of the musician, muttered, as he withdrew his instrument from the case and began to adjust the strings, "My ear has deceived me for ice; he's no of the Roldan blude." The rest was lost in the sound which he drew from the strings, and which no mortal foot could resist, for the fiddle spoke as plain as with tongue. He heard with joy the even beat of descending

feet, and he exclaimed, "My fiddle's a grand peacemaker! If there were strife atween twa bosom banes, it would settle and sooth it. Better beating the floor to melody sic as mine, than clanking ilk ither's crowns. But there's ane out of time."

"It's the sump of Knocklehang," cried Davie Gellock; "he maun be beat himsel before he can beat time."

"Are ye the lad that can do it?" inquired the young portioner; and, during the remainder of the reel, all was harmony.

"The spirit's gane frae the land," said an old bandsman, shaking his white head as he sat down his empty glass; "the spirit's gane frae the land. In my youthful days, words no half sae warm as these would have produced sic a braw fight! and there's nae lack of weapons for willing hands here; a dozen of flails make twa dozen of gude fighting-sticks, a' the vae kens that, forbye pitchforks and rake-handles; but of all things the strake of the bushel for me. But, Simon Glen, I'm saying the spirit I think's gane out of our drink too: this punch is cauld and fizenless. But what's a' this, now—what's a' this! Preserve us! here's a sight for sair een!" As he spoke the doors opened, and Lady Winifred Roldan, accompanied by a young lady, and followed by her two waiting maidens, entered the place and took her seat on a covered bench, prepared at the head of the barn for titled guests—for titled guests sometimes condescended to honour rustic merriment with their august presence.

In those days the aristocracy were reserved and haughty enough; but the link which connected them with the humbler classes was not snapped in twain, as it has been in these latter times. There was a bridge, narrow indeed, and insecure, between the great common of rustic life and that paradisiacal table-land on which the titled and the wealthy sat or reposed; a bridge of dread, like that described in the old romance, over which none but the great-minded and the daring could pass. The belted earl and the wealthy baron admitted their rustic dependants to their halls on great festival-days; and when kirk-suppers, and other set times of social-merriment occurred in the farmer's hall, state was laid aside, and they looked on and smiled; their ladies gazed over their fans or through their veils, and perhaps their daughters condescended to walk down a country-dance with some handsome or intrepid ploughman, who had the audacity to ask that honour. It was in conformity to this ancient custom that Lady Winifred made her appearance to-night, at the harvest kirk of one of the dependants of her house; and, as soon as the rustling of her silks had ceased, and her attendants had taken seats, the mirth of the evening recommenced, as lively, but more decorous than before.

The young lady who accompanied Lady Roldan was of great beauty, and a stranger: her dress was simple, but rich: a white satin fillet, studded with diamonds, restrained her hair; but nothing could restrain the speaking brightness of her looks as the tune struck up, and the fiddler lent his spirit to his art, and caused his strings to utter both words and music. Morison could not look on this vision without motion; but he did not allow her looks to fetter his feet or take away the graceful ease of all his steps; and so well did he acquit himself, that Lady Winifred could not help observing that the young peasant danced with all the grace and eagerness of one of gentle blood. It is probable that he overheard her words; or, what is more likely, he read in the eyes of the fair stranger that she would not refuse her and if modestly asked: he accordingly stepped up, and, bowing, begged that honour; she looked at him for a moment, and rising, with a smile, took her place; and as she took it, the musician, slanting his cheek to the instrument, played an air which he declared was fit only for feet inspired with poetry and music.

The feet that beat time to the tune were quite worthy of the divinity which the musician claimed for it: his face flushed up with delight; his sightless eyes seemed to see; and he exclaimed, "Well done, feet! by God, ye surpass fiddle-strings!" He changed the tune again and again; he drew a bolder and a stronger bow; but still, to all his miracles of music, as he called his favourite reel-tunes, did Morison and the young lady keep time, till, fairly worn out and wearied with rapture, the fiddler paused, wiped the moisture from his brow, and said, "Aweel, this coves a'! deil has nae, fiddle and a' thegither, if ever I heard the yauchie on't. But where's the bairns that did it, and what's their names? I wish they would come within reach of my hand, that I might touch and tell them what's in them." The young lady glanced at Morison: he interpreted her meaning, and led her up to the seat of the blind old man. "Ay, ay! I hear ye," he said, "but dinna speak till I speak." He then laid his pale thin hand on the young lady's head, and passed it over her brow and temples, nose and chin, with the slow motion of an instrument tracing a profile. "That will do," he said; "now for the other." He passed his hand over Morison's face, pausing on every lineament; nor did he leave their dresses untouched. "I canna make ye out," he said. "I'm puzzled, that never was puzzled before; ye are both Roldans, that I wot weel; but how come the diamonds and satins of the lass, and the hamespun sea-green suit o' the lad? Oh! this is a sad world, when those that hung, maybe, at the same breast, are so different in their fortunes! Awa' wi' ye now, like dainty anes, and dance, and laugh, and rejoice; for what says the wise rhymer—

'The present moment is our ain;
'The next we never saw.'

As Morison and his partner stood awaiting the music for a second reel, the former said, "The skill of that old man in thairms is greater than in faces, I fear: the harmony of a pair of handsome feet has confused his mind, and he finds resemblances that never existed."

"You seem alarmed lest his guess should prove true," replied the young lady, with a voice low and sweet; "I wish you would ask the prophet and fiddler to interpret to me the looks of Lady Winifred—she cannot take her eyes off you—she claims you for a Roldan."

"I can interpret them," said Morison, in a whisper: "The lady of Roldan sees in your unworthy partner a creature whose birth is a byword, and whose name is not to be sounded in the ears of the stainless and the far descended." The young lady gazed on him as he spoke, and seemed about to answer him; he however proceeded—"Yes," said he, and his eye kindled with his words, "I am an outcast and a vagabond: he to whom I owe the looks which even the hand of the blind discovered, refused to know me as a son—but all the better: I shall be something yet, lady, or I shall soon be nothing. Your very looks appear to reprove my presumption for dancing with you: but I only bowed; I presumed not to touch your hand."

Her hand was in his in a moment—"There," she said, "feel now that there is at least one in the world whose soul is superior to those prejudices to which you allude. Hear me, Morison!"

Lady Winifred was on her feet in a moment; the quick rustling of her silks showed the agitation of her mind; and just as the musician gave the preluding flourish to the commencement of the reel, she seized Morison's partner by the hand, saying, "Come, Rose Roldan, we are here too long; I ought to have known to what we would be exposed by mingling with such company." As she hurried her off she was heard to say, probably in reply to some remark made by Lady Rose—"Can a rotten branch of a stately tree put forth leaves, and blossom, and bear fruit? Should a weed, planted in a garden for a flower, not be pulled up and cast away? Am I to look at a will-o'-wisp with the reverence due to a fixed star?"

Morison stood, when thus robbed of his partner, as if uncertain what to do; his looks denoted so well what he felt, that honest Davie was heard to mutter, "O that Knockles wad but say a word to him now!" What he hoped, happened: the young laird had seen with no pleasant feelings the impression which Morison made on all by his courtesy of manners and his graceful carriage in the dance; he heard,

oo, the whispers go round how like the Lady Rose was to Morison; he had detected Mattie Anderson in the very act of thieving a look at him, and imagined that he read a preference to his rival in her eyes. This so incensed him that he resolved to insult the other in the face of the company.

It chanced that a wandering woman was staying for the night at Dalgarrack: her bed was in the barn; and she came to seek her place among the sacks and the straw. Lorburne seized her as she crossed the floor, and, before any one could imagine his meaning, thrust her before Morison, saying, "There is a partner more suitable than the last."

The poor woman gave a look up in Morison's face, and wished to be gone; but he stayed her, saying, "He's right." The music struck up, and well, and to the surprise of all, did she acquit herself in the dance; though encumbered—why should we conceal it?—"with rags, and bags, and clouted shoon," she danced with both ease and grace: when conducted to a seat, she said, "I have danced on figured floors; but there are ups and downs in this world, and a full share has fallen to me—but bless thee, young man—bless thee, whoever thou art! for not despising a gift which, I need not tell thee, was bestowed in scorn."

Morison then walked up to the young laird, and said, "You have uttered words about me to-night, and given me a partner, neither of which were required at your hands; step to the door, and show me how you can justify it."

To the door, nothing at all loath, stepped the laird: Davy in a moment bolted it behind them, and setting his back to the bar, exclaimed, "A minute will do; dinna spare him, Morison; gie him his kale through the reek—that's right—thrash him weel, thrash him weel! for bonnie Mattie Anderson's looking."

It was not without some force, and a blow or two, that Davie was removed, and the door thrown open; the upshot justified his confidence in his friend; young Knockles, as Davy called him, was lying on the ground, and Morison waiting his rising—but this rising was to be no act of his own: two or three blows on the face, which had drawn blood, and one or two blows elsewhere, which had deprived him of breath, were hints not to rise in a hurry; and when, by the interposition of friends, he was placed on his feet, he rubbed his bloody face, looked ruefully at his hands, and seemed about as ready to run away as to renew the battle.

"This cock winna fight, he can only crawl," said Davie; "and now I think the very midden hens may beat him at that."

Morison, who exhibited no marks of the other's prowess, returned to the dancing-floor, and his joyous looks, pleasant words, and active feet, showed that the memory of past events had probably passed away.

The mirth which these matters had partially interrupted grew louder and more sustained ; the reek rose thicker and richer from the punch-bowl ; stories of old loves and old battles, and anecdotes, witty or humorous, were all at least begun, if neither fairly listened to nor brought to an end. The laird of the Netherton spoke on the natural rotation of the crops ; the goodman of Barscroy told the history of a ewe of an over-sea breed, by which he hoped to improve the mutton and refine the wool of the district ; the laird of Moorfen produced a blade of a new-discovered grass, which would grow on a pouring sand as well as on a loam two ells deep—and better on a quaking bog than in a trenched garden ; he required but seven years and his own free-will, and Scotland would be converted into one great grazing-park, of which the English would eat the flesh and the Scotch pouch the siller. A fourth had invented a machine by which “ I shall,” said he, “ enable man to fulfil the intentions of Providence. There’s Glengarnock burn ; God, sir, let me but put my machine into it, and I’ll turn it into a navigable river fit for sloops and seventy-fours.”

But Willie Wilson, of Gusedubs, talked loudest and longest. He claimed the merit of being the inventor and maker of a singular boat. “ I was sitting,” he said, “ ae night by the chimley lug, and I thought on the sea as I heard it roaring, and how that born ne’er-doweel Paul Jones maist slokened a’ the fires of London by stopping Newcastle coals. So, ye see, I said to myself, I’ll invent something—what shall I invent ? Weel, ye see, I said invent !—I shall just invent a boat that will dive down in the deep sea, and come up in Bologne harbour under the keels of the French navy, and blaw them to the moon ; and I invented it. Weel, ye see, I hoyed awa to London ; and, sir, wad ye believe’t !—the Admiraality took half a year to consider on’t—ae secretary set it on ae end, the other secretary set it on the tother ; but they could make nothing o’t. At length, sir, in came aye of the admirals, and he declared that a’ my wheels, and pulleys, and masts, and rapes, were put in hab nab at random—he was nae far wrang there—sae, to make a lang tale short, I pouched twa guineas a week o’ their siller, passed as a genius for a full half year—longer than the usual lot of man—and here am I, wi’ my bit boat, waiting for a change of ministry, when I shall be a genius again, and pouch the gowd ance mair.”

During this conversation the floor was filled and emptied several times with country-dances and reels. Morison, with Mattie Anderson for his partner, extracted melody, as the musician averred, from the very dumb deals of the thrashing-floor ; nor did he trust to his attractive feet and graceful form alone to render himself acceptable ; he talked of earlier days, when, seated beside her in the school, he felt

infected by her breath on his cheek—how he loved to linger with her on his way home—pluck flowers for her among the cliffs, and paidle with her in the mill-burn, forming new currents among the silver sand with their feet. Nor did he fail to allude to the high trees which he had climbed to pluck wild cherries for her : nay, how he had braved spring-guns; and man-traps, and living watchers, to bring her plums and apples which she loved. To his surprise these words—and they were warmly uttered—fell on cold ears ; she turned suddenly round on him and said, “ It’s a’ very gude to talk of lessons at school, and of the flowers and cherries ye pulled for me, but ye maun be sensible that ye are aiming to match wi’ ane that’s mair nor yere marrow. I saw wi’ my ain een how Lady Winifred looked on ye this very night, sae there is nae hope there ; and will your mither’s wee pickle siller plenish a house fit for me, think ye ? Na, na : then there’s the lack of parentage—I have had my een opened this night.”

The eyes of Morison were opened somewhat also : he was stung, and that sharply ; not that he had ever felt so deeply in the matter as Miss Anderson had done. “ Ye speak plainly, Mattie,” he said : “ yet humility suits us all best. But had I kenned ance what I ken now, ye should have had reason to remember the bower-tree bank of Barn-hourie Hill.”

A loud blast of the harvest-horn summoned the dancers to supper, and as they walked from the barn to the house, Davie said, “ An I were you, Morison, I wadna mind Mattie Anderson’s scorn mair than a drap of rain when the wind’s i’ the wast : ye may catch her when ye like for a’ her tossings o’ the head to-night ; but then be cautious, lad, what ye catch. Did I no see her skaling dung on the craft wi’ her best spencer on, and three feathers, ane white, ane blue, and ane red in her riggin. I’m doubtfu’, Morison, I’m doubtfu’, that she has mair sail than ballast : like Willie Wastle’s sloop, no sae sicker when the breeze is high as she should be—gaye and like to whamle—ye understand me.”

CHAPTER VII.

"Critiques I read on other men,
And hypers upon them agen;
From whose remarks I give opinion
On twenty books, but ne'er look in one."

PRIOR.

MORISON returned to the Elfin-glen, and lay down, but it was neither to dream of the scorn of Mattie Anderson, the insolence of the young laird, nor of the strains of the musician. A vision of Rose Roldan was presented to his fancy in sleep. Her look was tranquil and lovely—she placed her hand in his with the frankness of a sister—and they walked and talked in the Elfin-glen :—on all things they looked with the same eyes ; they felt with the same hearts ; they heard with the same ears, and one soul seemed to inform them both : nay, when they paced along the side of the brook, he imagined a voice said, " Bless them both, they are as like one another as twin cherries."

When he awoke the vision and the reality were in full possession of his fancy ; he thought all the events of the night over again ; considered her words—recalled her looks, and felt anew the frank surrender of her hand ;—a white one, and bright with jewels. An affection of a pure and lofty nature filled his mind. Who she was he had inquired in vain ; even Nickie Neevison acknowledged that the lady-like lassie was an utter stranger to her—quite a new face ; but the family stamp was on her, and nae doubt she was a bit private manufacture of Lord Roldan's—he was just a ringing deevil amang the lasses—yet she wad do him the justice to say he had never fashed her, though mony a civil thing he had said.

But, with all this sweet, bitter was mingled. Morison reflected on his humble and half-forlorn condition ; on the prejudice which his birth occasioned, respecting which he was doomed to receive more lessons than suited his pride or his temper ; he also surveyed the steep up which his mother wished he should ascend to distinction, and was neither much pleased with the way, nor edified with the prospect. To become eminent as a divine great learning was required, for he rightly deemed it presumptuous to attempt to preach the gospel without an intimate acquaintance with the ancient languages, and also with the history, the manners, and customs of the old nations, through which the scriptures required to be read. When all this was accomplished, a patron was to be sought ; and where was such to be found for one

deprived of a father's protection, and with the prejudice of society strong against his hopes? It is true that Jeanie Rabson cried ever, "Morison, dinna despair; but trust in God, and ye will be a light sic as Scotland has na had since the days of the godly Rutherford."

Now Morison trusted greatly in God; indeed, he had no other trust, save in his own quickness of parts and firmness of nature; but as he did not well know how fortune might chop and change, he resolved to embellish his mind with all such knowledge as might be useful; and as he found no difficulty in mastering whatever he turned his thoughts to, our readers must not be surprised to hear that he not only filled his mind with such wisdom as books and conversation supply, but became expert in many manly exercises. In these, his activity and fine combination of form, his quick eye and vigorous arm, soon enabled him to excel; he acquired great skill in the use of the sword, narrow as well as broad; he could bring the curlew from the cloud with his rifle; hit a bird at twenty paces with a pistol-ball, and the wildest horse in the district he could back and rule at full gallop without either bridle or saddle. On the morning which followed the kirm at Dalgarrock, he went with Davie Gellock to the sea-cliffs to practise with ball, and look on the tide coming into the bay—at all times a beautiful sight. Before he returned the sun was wellnigh the setting, and visitors, of whom we must render some account, had been at the Elfin-glen.

On and about this period man had found out many inventions. In one part of the world the sway of monarchical government was so severely felt, that the people broke the sceptre, and restored men with white skins to their original freedom, but retained those with dark skins in bondage, merely to show the world, by contrast, the full value of liberty. In another part of the earth religion was declared to be priestcraft; law a chain forged for man by the aristocracy; marriage a ridiculous obligation, insulting to true love and the God of heaven himself, a being of whose existence philosophical minds doubted, but which might be settled by ballot; while, in the little isle where the scene of this domestic story is laid, a series of inventions in law, mechanics, and literature, had received the sanction of all with classic lore in their heads, gold in their pockets, and good coats on their backs.

Of these latter we mean to speak. The new theory in law laid it down as a maxim that the wild birds of the air, the wild beasts of the field, and the untamed fish of the sea and river, together with the waste fields and commons of the land, did not belong to all men, as had hitherto been believed, but were, whatever scripture might say to the contrary, expressly created for the use and pleasure of the titled

and the rich ; and that, whoever used the same contrary to act of parliament, should be imprisoned or banished.

The new power in mechanics was of a singular nature. The lever, the wedge, and the screw were the invention of the poor, who desired to toil, and who—doomed to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow—made no tools but such as were in unison with

“ That sad sentence of an ancient date.”

But in all this the rich were too much at the mercy of the poor ; so those refractory machines, composed of muscle, and bone, and blood, were cast aside, and supplanted by instruments of iron, and brass, and wood, which—for the boon of a little oil, and, at first, a little outlay—refused to work for the poor and the needy, and toiled only for those who ate the fish of the stream, the fowls of the air, and the wild beasts of the field, according to law. This benevolent invention was superior to that of gunpowder ; for while the discovery of the monk helped to clear the earth of half a million annually of those grumbling scoundrels who infested its surface, the invention of the mechanic turned an equal number out of employment, and gave them full liberty to range the public street and the king's highway, and enjoy all the freedom which man in his natural state was capable of—except the privilege of eating and drinking, and enjoying the earth and the fulness thereof.

The third invention was of a more subtle nature, and merits a fuller description. In the former, the quick spirit of England had a share ; but this latter was the legitimate babe of old Scotland alone ;—the fruit of mickle care and study, and, like a moth, was begot between sheets of sheep-skin and pasteboard by old father antic the law ; the gospel, indeed, had some share in the conception ; but, lest the imputation should impeach Calvinistic gravity, it was imputed to a laxer Lutheran, who owned the impeachment, since it did him no dishonour in a church where God was worshipped by means of machinery ! Learning—which means ignorance of all that is living, and knowledge of all that is dead—was beginning to lose its influence on mankind. To restore a dethroned comma, drowse over all such reading as was never read, and spell dead languages, were the wise acquirements that had long usurped the seat of genius : they were now falling to leeward. This was perceived and felt by Braunks and Blynders, two of the professors of the new mysteries—men who undertook to set the world right, and said that all under the sun was wrong ; commerce was wrong ; agriculture was wrong ; art was wrong ; science was wrong ; history was wrong ; poetry was wrong ; nature was wrong.

"Behold," said Blynders, "the coming of a new era; let us go forth and read a lesson to the people of the land; let us preach up that all is darkness, and that we are the light; that man is but groping his way in tilling the ground, shearing sheep, planting trees, manufacturing linen, and in all rural improvements and domestic comforts."

"And let us," said Braunks, "raise a new judgment-seat, and become the self-elected judges over the wide realms of literature; let us always praise the dead—the illustrious dead—and see nothing but the defects of the living; let us feel more disgust with one error, than delight with ten thousand beauties; and if this be done boldly, mankind will believe in us, and we shall become great in the earth, and our judgments shall put nature down, and elevate learning—for what says Pangloss, the great apostle of the art we profess! 'Legs were made for stockings; therefore we wear stockings.'"

Something of the dread which a brood of chickens feel when the shadow of the kite's wings suddenly comes upon them, seized the people of Glengarnock when they heard that those two mysterious and terrible personages had made an inroad on their valley. It flew like moorburn over the land, and all eyes looked to those northern lights as men look to the sky when a comet brightens the firmament.

"They are fearful men," said Nickie Neevison, who had either seen them or imagined it. "They are sae wise that naught pleases them. They find fault wi' the house, because it stands on a knowe; wi' the orchard, because it grows in a valley; the lake they say is abominable, because there are pike in it and no salmon; and the river is worse, because it has salmon and no pike. They find fault with the thrush, for it only sings; with the blackbird, because it whistles—in short, they hold that, as nature is wrong, it is the business of men to set it right."

"Preserve us all!" said Jeanie Rabson, to whom these words were spoken—"they maun be wise men, indeed; and I'm thinking here they come. The tane is lang, black aviced, a tinker-like slough of a fallow; and the tither is wee ferret-eed and fiery—a gowk and titlin sort of pair. Wha would think that the best gifts of God were hidden in sic unseemly sanctuaries!—But gowd keeps weel in a calf-skin purse."

"Here," said the gowk, halting and looking on Howeboddom, "we have traced sloth and ignorance to their den. The house is calculated to dispose its inmates to rest, not to stimulate them to exertion; the very smoke comes lazily from the lum-head. Here resides one of those sons of sloth who refuses to commit his barley to the soil till the ground communicates heat to him when he sits down upon it."

"And here," said the titlin, "all is on a small and

tracted scale: no extensive system is laid down, no scientific principles of cultivation understood. Men slumber on, and women sleep, rub their eyes without wakening, and call themselves happy."

"Ye astonish me," said the laird of Drumdrousie, who accompanied them. "If a happy household is in the land, it is that of the portioner of Howeboddom and his sister: but here is Jeanie herself. Ye are all wrong here, Jeanie; ye have been saving money, and sawing corn, and shearing sheep, contrary to all true principles; your gain is not true gain. I am sorry to say so; but Mr. Braunks and Mr. Blynders here are of my opinion."

"Then Mr. Braunks is but a gowk, and Mr. Blynders is nae better," said Nickie Neevison. "It's easier to tell them than to send them word."

"We are happy," said Jeanie, "and have nae wish to be better. We have won siller, and we strive to keep it. We open our doors to the poor and the needy, and they eat and drink, and go on their way; and we sow our corn and reap it, and rear our sheep and shear them; and we often praise God that he winna permit the earth to be forced into fruit save in the season, else man would be enslaved like an ox in a mill, and have nae time to wipe his brow and sing his praise."

"Such is the language we are ever doomed to hear," said Braunks.

"It is the cry of man, woman, and child," said Blynders. "But science will force its way; and the scales will fall from the eyes of even the benighted people of Howeboddom." Having uttered this testimony, they walked on.

"And what feudal barbarian dwells here?" inquired Braunks, pointing to Roldan Castle.

"He seems a savage of Scotland's darker day," said Blynders. "What is the name of his den?"

"He is one," said the laird, "whom I never speak loud about. That is the castle of Lord Roldan—the hawk's not at home."

"At home or abroad," said Braunks, "I would tell him, if I met him, that he who ought to set an example to the country is a drawback on its prosperity."

"Ye would have to snap a pistol with him, it is like, then," said the laird: "he's as proud as Satan and as hot as hell. I did but contradict him once at a county meeting, he challenged me in a moment. I threw off my coat, and offered to fight him where he stood, without the trouble of measuring ground and burning powder. He burst into a fit of laughter, and said to the Knight of Closeburn, 'Kirkpatrick, this Nithsdale kite of thine is but a goose!'"

"He is but a hot-headed fool, then," said Blynders; "and we shall say nothing to make him uneasy, or cause him to

wink and hold out his iron. But how can we shut our eyes to what is visible all around? Fields pastured which should be tilled, fields tilled which should be pastured; trees growing where no trees should be allowed to grow—all is haggard and unpruned. Where is the rolled walk of pure gravel; the hedge-row elms, all stately, straight, and planted by line and measure; where is the irregularity made regular? What beautiful absurdity of nature has he clapped on the back, and brought within the limit of art! All is random-work; there is no classic taste: he understands not the capability of the ground."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the laird; "I aye thought so. Capability!—a fine word."

"Here again!" exclaimed Braunks, pausing at the entrance of the Elfin-glen; "here we have a striking example of the folly and ignorance of man. Why has the Great First Cause poured this brook down this vale!—Who shall solve me that!—No one—but yet it is plain and palpable. Was it to water the fox-gloves, and bowers of honeysuckle, and holly on its banks? No. Was it to moisten the valley and promote the growth of corn? No. Was it that maidens might bleach their linen, and bards find in its sound a melody worthy of their longest ballads? No. But the Great First Cause sent it here to drive the machinery of a hundred mills, by which the holder of the soil should be enriched, and money added to the country's revenue, to enable it to carry on the march of mind."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the laird. "Drive a hundred mills!—I never thought of so many as that; but I proposed fifty, nevertheless."

"It is plain," said Blynders, "that all about this land is in a state of black nature: here is a stream, with many judicious falls and a handsome volume of water, which is, nevertheless, allowed by the lordly Hottentots of the soil to run to waste, forming five hundred nooks and crooks amid arable land. Why is its channel not straightened? Why is it not banked in with stone? That would enrich the landscape, and add to the stream the beauty of grain on the banks," and he held out his staff to indicate the line in which he wished the brook to run.

"An' I were you," said Nickie Neevison, who was on her way to the Elfin-cottage, "An' I were you, I would admit the burn into your counsels; it's not only an elf of a stream, but it's a perfect deevil whiles, and will not scruple to assert its natural dignity. Confine it between banks! Are ye daft! ye might as well try to confine a clap of thunder: bide a wee till a bairn is born to the house of Roldan, and I'll tell ye where yere grand embankments will be!"

Here Braunks muttered something, dived into his pocket, then into his pocket-book, fished out a memorandum, pe-

rused it carefully for a little space, and said: "A stream ruled in its overflow by the birth of man or woman is something new: had ye said that the star of the house of Roldan shot from its place, or that the spirit which has the family in its keeping appeared, I might have believed it."

"Ye can swallow a gaye deal for a' that," said Nickie. "As for sic a thing as a house star, I never heard of it; there is, indeed, a rumour and whisper that a ladye-spirit of matchless beauty watches owre the house of Roldan—not having seen it I canna say; but with regard to the overflow of the Elfin-burn, that I have witnessed myself: I mind na when Lord Roldan was born, but as the lad Morison came to the warld there was a spate!—and mair nor that, ask the woman that dwalls in the cottage up bye there—she has cause to remember it. But what 'are ye doing wi' yere kylevine and bit paper?—if ye are clinking down ilka word I say, I'll steek my gab for ever—Nickie Neevison's owre auld a cat to draw that strae afore. There was Jane Dibbin o' the lang vennel, an outspoken person like myself, somebody penned down what she said about Peg Dalzell and the laird of Girharrow, and it cost her baith gowd and white monie, as the sang says. Yet what need I care? write away—I speak nae scandal."

"It is because ye are speaking the truth," said Braunks, "that I am paying this attention to it: so the Elfin-burn, as you call it, has overflowed its banks once in your remembrance—has it not happened twice, think ye?"

"Hout, gae awa now, ye are no the quiet simple person ye wad have me believe: sae ye think there has been twa born instead of ane? d'ye ken I have jaloused sae myself?"

"Have you, indeed?" replied the other.

"Ay, indeed have I," said Nickie; "and, if you like to listen, I shall show you the grounds of my belief. It was just a year, ye see, after the birth of the boy Morison, that Lord Thomas came hame; naebody kenned weel how, yet a' fowk said he came by sea, and that he had a lady wi' him—a lady that was or should have been his wife. Now she was wondrous bonnie, folk said, but then she was of an heretical house, and that the old lady couldna stomach. The first day she did naught but rejoice owre her son, and the second she did naught but mourn owre her daughter, and on the third, because she wadna bow the knee to Baal and worship their saints, whilk we ca' idols, there was a grand gae to: and whether it was the proud Lady Winifred that put her out of the house, or whether it was the equally proud Lady Lilies—for so they ca'd her—that wadna bide in't, I canna weel say, but out she went; and a wild night it was, wi' fire i' the air and whirlwinds, and she took to the sea; and atween this and the French shore they say that a lass-bairn came to the world. Now, ye see, there's naught to hinder

all this to be true ; and there's naught to prevent it from being a bleezing falsehood, save that when fifteen years were come and gane, here comes frae the other side of the sea this quean—and a bonnie ane she is—Rose Roldan. Some say she is the bairn I spoke of ; some say she is the daughter of Lord Roldan by a foreign lady of his own way both in religion and morals ; and others say she is an orphan ;—weel I wot she's a Roldan, ony how ;—for, first and foremost, she has their stamp o' countenance ; and secondly, I heard her wi' my ain lugs as gude as own Morison Roldan for a brither, notwithstanding the stamp wi' the foot and the black looks of the old lady."

All this, and more, was carefully noted down, for these men added the profits of that mysterious art of confounding right and wrong, called law, to the income of criticism. One whispered to the other, "This supplies the very link which our chain of evidence required for establishing the conjugal claims of Lady Lilies."

They had now reached the hedge of holly which screened the abode of Mary Morison, when the voice of one singing was heard—the voice came from the cottage. "Whisht, hinnies, whisht!" said Nickie, "that's her voice, and she's singing the sang made about her own misfortunes—Lord, how lucky ! She never sang it to anybody but ance, and that was to Jeanie Rabson, and Jean's cheeks were wat for a week ;—O whisht—will ye no whisht ! The names, ye maun ken, are disguised, but the tale is a true ane."

"This is lucky," said Braunks to Blynders ; "we shall have the words of the vulgar muse from her own lips : we shall drink at the fount of rustic inspiration, and see the sentiment of the thing raw and rough, before learning polish-
es it into elegance, and bestows true beauty." The voice of Mary Morison now rose clear and distinct, nor was she conscious of singing so loud, or before such an audience.

THE BROKEN HEART OF ANNIE.

I.

"Up yon green glen, in yon wee bower,
Dwelt fair and lovely Annie ;
Ere she saw seventeen summers' suns
She waxed wondrous bonnie.
Young Lord Dalzell at her bower door
Had privily been calling,
When she grew faint and sick of heart,
And moanings fill'd her dwelling."

"Upon my honour," said Blynders, during the pause which ensued at the end of the verse, "this rustic damsel seems to have a pretty notion of her own perfections : how naively she records her charms, and how dexterously works in the visits of her lover."

"It's a' as true as that the sun's shining," said Nickie; "I ken her weel: she was not only the bonniest lass o' the country-side then, but she's the bonniest yet; there's no the like of Mary in seventeen parishes; and weel I wot her lover made his visits privily: not a soul jaloused it till his auld mither fand it out—as she finds out a' things, through the pope and the deevil. There was a bonnie hurly-burly! for, ye see, Lord Roldan had vowed marriage—some said, had written it—and would keep his word; and his mother vowed she wad hae him released frae sic obligations—she belongs to a handy kirk for that—but she's singing again." The song was renewed, but in a lower voice.

II.

"I found her like the lily-flower
When rain has drench'd its blossom;
Wet were her cheeks, and a sweet babe
Hung smiling at her bosom.
Such shudderings shook her frame as seem'd
Both heart and soul to sever;
In no one's face she look'd—her bloom
Was fading, and for ever."

"Aha!" said Blynders; "so that is the upshot, is it? Her grief has fallen into her arms: there is a natural inclination to wickedness in all untutored minds; here's this pretty peasant giving her sins an airing in song. It will ease her heart, though the rhyme is of the rudest."

"Ye word it weel," said Nickie Neevison; "but d'ye think that sin is the offspring of ignorance—will ye say what was the offspring of knowledge—did ye ever read the Bible, and see what Eve gat by her wisdom? I have ye there, ye serpent! She's singing again."

III.

"Thou hast thy father's smile, my babe,
Maids' eyes to dim wi' grieving;
His willing glance, which woman's heart
Could fill with fond believing.
A voice which made his falsest vows
Seem breathings all of heaven;
And get from hearts which he had broke
His perjuries forgiven."

"I am beginning," said Braunks, "to weary of this dolorous ditty; the rustic muse sends her flour to market with the bran unbolted: Scotland is inundated with easy rhymes; the voice of the frogs of Egypt was typical of them, they are so harsh, rugged, and unmelodious."

"We must sentence them, from the critical judgment-seat, to silence and oblivion," said Blynders; "such untutored strains have prevailed too long in the land."

"Ye maun begin, then, wi' the thrush on the budding bough, and the lark in the simmer cloud," said Nickie;

"they are untutored songsters, nor are their songs mair natural than those which come from the lips of shepherds watching their lambs, mothers watching owre their slumbering bairns, ay! or that of the ploughman lad wi' red mools on his shoon. I sometimes take to singing, just to please mysel—it's wonderfu', as the laird here says, it's really wonderfu' what consolation ane finds in a sang—a natural ane, I mean; but Mary's at it again—whisht!"

IV.

"My false love came to me yestreen,
With words all steep'd in honey;
He kiss'd his babe, and said, Sweet wean,
Be as thy mother bonnie.
Then out he pull'd a purse o' gold,
Wi' rings and rubies mony;
I look'd at him, but couldna speak,
Ye've broke the heart of Annie.

V.

"'Tis not thy gold and jewels bright,
Nor words like dropping honey,
Thy silken scarves, and mantles fine,
And caps all laced and bonnie,
Can bring me back the peace I've tint,
Or heal the heart of Annie—
Go speak to thy God of broken vows,
For thou hast broken mony."

"So," said Blynders, "this is one of the strains which have made Scotland famous for lyric talent. It is simple indeed, and the poverty of its sentiment is only equalled by its barrenness in rhyme. As it is a vulgar record of rustic feelings, it may please coarse minds. When the croak of the crow is mistaken for the amorous trill of the lark, then will this song take its place among the bright strains of minds purified by learning."

"Now ye see," said Nickie, "I just admire it for what ye dislike it for: it's no like a polished song, and it's a' the better. The thistle is na like the rose, yet it's a martial flower, and lovely in its kind when laden wi' bees, and the bonnie blooming bonnets are crowning it with beauty. If ye canna talk mair sensible anent sang to ithers than ye have done to me, ye will as soon move millstones wi' whistling jig-tunes, as harm the natural songs of Scotland wi' your criticisms. If ye will speak, speak to England, where they have no music, and consequently no true sangs, and will swallow ony incredible fiction of sound."

The door of the cottage was open, and they all walked in. Mary was sitting flowering a mantle; the flowers were those of her native glen, and wrought in with a delicacy and elegance which made Nickie Neevison declare it would make a covering fit for the shoulders of Summer herself.

"It is curious," said Blynders—"only curious from being

wrought by untutored hands, and imitated from weeds common to the soil. It is of a piece with the song we have just heard, simple, and such as may be found without much expense of travel."

Mary looked in the speaker's face, and said, "Who are you, sir, that you presume to press in upon the privacy of an unprotected person, and insult her by playing the listener to her words when she thought herself alone?"

"Upon my soul!" said Blynders to his companion, "that abruptness was fine. It would have made an impression even on the fifteen—men not easily moved—I must try it on my return:—'Who are you, that you thus presume to press on the privacy—?' I can bring it in with effect, I have no doubt of it."

The light in Mary's eyes intimated the burning of her heart. Blynders was quite accustomed to such emotions. "Be composed, madam," he said. "We—that is, Mr. Braunks and myself—are what may be called sole monarchs over the wide realms of science and taste. When we say bad, all the wise and learned men of the land cry bad; and when we cry good, all the wise and learned men of the isle shout good likewise. As we are, therefore, absolute in all such matters, you must not be peevish with us because we listened to and recorded your song."

"Recorded it!" said Mary. "Am I to understand that you have not only intruded upon me, but written down the sorrowful words of a bleeding heart, that they may be chanted in the public streets, hawked about the country-side, and sung up Nith and down Dee?"

"I have written them down," said Blynders, with a sneer, "not that they may be sung along the pastoral streams of Scotland, but for the purpose of printing them with the polished strains of classic learning, to show to the world the difference between the compact and elegant lyrics of old, and the loose, flimsy ditties of the rustics of our latter days. They will be of use as a matter of contrast."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the laird of Drumdrousie. "Who ever heard before of aught useful coming from rustic verse? You ought to be thankful, woman, that men of such learning and taste condescend to quote your sang, though only by way of contrast."

"I am thankful for nothing of the sort, sir," said Mary; "nor is it becoming in gentlemen to trample on the feelings of one so poor and so crushed as I am. I have erred and I have suffered; but my errors were harmful chiefly to myself and to my poor boy, who has a heart not formed, alas! for the bosom of a slave, nor calculated to endure the contumelies which the stain of his birth will, I see, heap upon him. O, sir! dinna make use of that sang, and I will never sing it mair: indeed, I didna ken I was singing it even now;

t I sing it whiles unconsciously, for it eases my heart;—
ay your heart never be so heavy that a melancholy song
n lighten it!"

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the laird; "lighten ane's heart
th a melancholy song! I shall try that, for I am some-
es sad. I was sad this simmer, when dae nettles sprang
in the Kirncannie moss instead of carrots; and I was
d, too, when we dug for coals in the Flowanfiosh, and got
ught but peats."

Blynders and Braunks rose to be gone. "You ought to
a happy woman," said the former; "for you have fur-
shed a sample of song which will presently be instanced
in our judgment-seat as a specimen of that simple and
evenly style which, coming from a vulgar source, is not
dly injuring the legitimate cause of classic verse, but is
solutely choking the rising crop of rhymers."

"Ay, you ought to rejoice, Mary—what is your other
une—Morison!" said Braunks; "for had we not come to
is vale to lay down our great philosophical principles in
onomic agriculture and in classic verse, the song which
ou have composed would have gone forth over the land
ke moorburn, misleading all the seventeen hundred poets
hich this age, prolific in rhyme, has poured forth. Behold,
oman! in this little volume is written down not only your
ong, but some score of others, all of the same stamp—
earing the rude impress of rustic feeling—here they are;
ne of the most striking is called 'Nickie Neevison,' and
elebrates a harum-scarum, scandal-loving, wrinkled old
aiden, with a humour which wants but a touch of classic
race to render it resistless."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the laird; "who could have
ritten it! for lo! here stands Nickie, the harum-scarum
nd the scandal-loving. I must learn this song, and sing it
hen all other schemes of happiness fail."

When the laird of Drumdrousie said, "Here stands
Nickie," there she stood, a figure of wonder petrified; her
ands, as yellow as the claws of the kite, held up and hov-
ring in the air, and her eyes, cat gray and sore round the
orders, as if faced with red plush, opened wide and grew
quite circular, while a single speck of light in the middle
inkled and twinkled, as if the moisture around threatened
t with instant extinction. Down at once came her claws
on the book; and down, too, came a torrent of words, of
which the waterspout on the birth of Morison was but as a
symbol; she emptied her wrath alternately, like a couple of
uckets, on the two philosophers.

"An ye'll come here, ye wee shilpit apology for man, wi'
thae winnelstrae legs and winnelakewed een, to gather idle
rhymes reflecting on women of virtue and worth like me!
An ye'll come too, ye lang slouching gipsy ne'er-doweel, wi'

a face that wad make a corbie scunner, to aid and abet him there in gathering his paddock-stool verse! D'ye think I didna ken ye the first moment I saw ye? Laird, this wee ane was drappit out of the basket of Kate Candlish, the gipsy, and she wadna be fashed to stoop and take him up; and this lang ane balanced spoons and kettles for three years to Black-at-the-bane of Lochmaben. I wad score their visages wi' my nails, but that wad make them mair warld-like."

"Wondrous!" exclaimed the laird. "But, though my two friends are lowly just now, they will get up soon—they will rise."

"They winna rise till a' ither folk are risen, laird," said Nickie, her wrath subsiding after the seizure of the book, and the emptying she had given to her heart—"they will rise at the resurrection—and not till then."

A hasty step was heard on the floor, and Morison advancing, said, "What is the matter, mother—what is the matter?"

"Nothing, my son," said Mary; "these gentlemen have been speaking of matters which affected me, but it is over now."

"Over now!" said Nickie; "it's easily over wi' you—they have raised a storm that winna soon blow over wi' me. What d'ye think, Morison, lad? I shall say naught about the song which was made on your birth, because the event was real; but somebody has made a scoffing song even on me, Nickie Neevison, and these twa skellums got a haud o't, along with the ane that yere mother whiles sings, waefu' bodie: and they were gaun to sing them on the stage; but I trow I have settled the business—I hae drawn a thorn in that slap—but O, an I had a grip o' the loon that made the sang!" And she extended her two thin skinny hands, bent her fingers, till the nails, seldom pruned, with which they were armed, seemed claws, and biting her lip, and winking, intimated the greeting in reserve for the slanderer.

"Wondrous!" cried the laird. "But it's weel kenned I have nae talent that way."

"Naeboddy's accusing you," said Nickie, "o' ony thing that a man might be suspeckit of—but I wadna wonder if this mis-leared callant, Morison, kens mair about the sang than he lets on. Ah! you loon, I see by your look it was you; the blood of the Roldans is up to a' manner o' deevilry." There was forgiveness in her smile.

On retiring from the Elfin-glen, the laird of Drumdrousie said to his companions, "Well, it is better that yon fool woman snatched the songs and burnt them; no good could have come of printing them, but much evil. The poor woman Mary, as they call her, was averse to it; and I am persuaded the lad Morison would have been no better

pleased than his mother; nay, I am convinced that he would have wrought some mischief on all and sundry far it. The Roldans are downright devils or real angels—they're either all black or all white."

"I would have penned something about him that would have burnt for ever, like a fixed star," said Braunks; "those who meddle with me receive a brand which lasts to eternity."

"And mickle gude that wad do ye!" said Nickie Neeverson; "the Roldans are the lads that build houses for those they hate, whilk last through eternity. The boy Morison can bring the hawk from the lift wi' a single bullet; and he could pit twenty holes in your waistcoat with the point of a sword, and yet no harm the skin."

"Awful!" said the laird; "a born deevil! It's weel that he's a bastard, and can come to nae rule in the land."

CHAPTER VIII.

"A cozie ingle and a clean hearth stane."

BURNS.

THE comfortable fire and the clean-swept floor required by the poet in his idea of rural happiness, were both present in the farmhouse of Howeboddum; but the smile of the thrifty wife, and the prattle of numerous children, with which the picture in verse is completed, were absent. Nor will we venture to say that their place was supplied by either the kindly nature of a sister, or the active and cheerful diligence of servants; yet it may be affirmed that moderate joy and modest happiness were of the household; and that sunniness of the breast which is the inheritance of those who are active in well-doing, was there as a constant and cheering light. The farm, or rather lairdship, of Howeboddum, was extensive; the occupants were not only rich according to rumour, but were wealthy in reality; and as they both seemed inclined to lead a single life, the imagination of their neighbours was now and then employed in the charitable task of finding them heirs through which their wealth might realize the image of the poet, and run like fountains.

We have not forgotten to intimate that Jeanie Rabson was not only good-looking, but had a kind and a tender heart, on which Dominie Milligan was now and then making uncouth experiments; which scared the spinster rather than pleased her; but we have, we fear, said less than enough about her only brother, James—her elder by two years: a

quiet, worthy man; well formed, too, with looks rather pleasing than intelligent; and who seemed always as if lost in a dream, save when great occasions roused him. He was, indeed, generally in a dream—a dream of early and unrequited love. He had, when a boy at school, become attached to Mary Morison; and as he grew up this was strengthened, till it grew into love—not love warm, blushing, and strong—all energy and passion—but love meek and gentle, indicated in looks and acts of attention and kindness; and which, we grieve to say it, has less success with beauty than it deserves. When the country was busy with her name and fame, all tongues were loud in the censure of the bonnie lass of Elfin-burn, save those of Jeanie Rabson and her brother; the latter said little indeed, but he felt much and rightly; he was never provoked to mirth afterward; he forsook all society save that of his sister, whom he tenderly loved; and though he had always been charitable, he now opened his doors wider than ever to those wandering mendicants who, sometimes unworthily, roam the country and collect alms by calm solicitation or clamorous importunity.

In such company the laird of Howeboddom seemed to take delight; but though he was liberal to all, he was most indulgent to that unhappy class of vagrants who are touched in the intellect,

“The moping idiot and the madman gay;”

and that dubious specimen of insanity—hovering, as the Scots saying has it, between gowk and gorkhawk—the shrewd wittol—with humour, and even wit, and pranks partaking of both, and an idiot still. Scenes indecorous, and sometimes alarming, occurred at Howeboddom; nevertheless, the strange elements which the laird’s hospitality gathered round his hall fire at night were, in his hands, ductile as cream; when their wildness was at its height, his look and word awed them into repose. All this and other foibles induced the neighbours to shake their heads and whisper, “The laird of Howeboddom’s no the thing he should be.” The shepherd said, in allusion to his own vocation, “The laird has got a straik o’ tar too much;” the ploughman averred that the laird’s sock had “owre mickle grun, and turned up jingle-stanes wi’ the rich mools;” the shoemaker said, his “boots had been sewed in a hard frost, and took in water at the welting;” the weaver declared that “the web of his understanding was pirnie;” the blacksmith said that “his intellect had been burnt in the waulding-heat;” and the mason muttered, “scrimp to the gage.” In short, all trades and callings agreed that the gudeman of Howeboddom was rankled in the brain, save his sister

eanie, who observed, "Our James has nae sae mickle to say for himself as some I could name; but wha excels him in doing wise and sensible things! Let them that think in a fool try to take him in; and them that ca' him silly y to gie him the breadth of his back."

The night in which the house of Howeboddom appeared, we have hastily sketched it was Hallow-eve, when, in addition to the usual household, more than the usual number of wanderers appeared, allured, no doubt, by the hospitality of the house of Rabson, as well as by the rustic charms and mells of the evening. These personages were seated apart from the family on a long settle beyond the fire, which extended almost from side to side of the hall. First, there was John Tamson, who carried a blackthorn staff which he called Fidum, three wallets with not less than a hundred weight of old iron, old crystal, and broken china; he was a preaching idiot; his pulpit was a midden-stead, his text hell-fire, and one could hear him a mile down the wind, so loud was his voice. Secondly, there was Manting Will, so called from his stutter—he always carried a large stone in his hand, to throw, he said, at James Rabson's mickle duck—namely, the mander, which he said bit him, and hissed him, and put him in fear of his life; he was wise enough to refuse to gather alms, for it was heavy, and Will was lazy; nor did he love poverty, for wealth had its inconveniences—all that he desired was a warm meal and a soft bed. He had no better clothing than rags, but always excellent shoes, which he obtained by a certain sleight of hand he practised on a wider scale in early life.

The third personage was Kipp Cairns, a thin, earnest-looking old man, with a white head and genteel air; winter and summer he wore thread stockings, buckles in his shoes, and powder in his hair;—he was an idiotic dandy, and had a fair estate. The laird in his youth thought himself irresistible among ladies, and his charms such that he had no need to offer and be accepted. A wily neighbour wagered his own estate against the laird's, that Miss Jenny Todd, of the fire-hole, would refuse him. Away started the laird, to find the lady on the way to the kirk to be married. He dreaded guns and pistols as much as Will did the Howeboddom gander; and, moreover, he indulged in sallies of wit which even the witty dreaded to encounter.

The fourth and last of the band was Robin Wightman, who had more of oddity than of madness in his brain. He expected all mankind; and not without reason, for a cunning lawyer, whom he trusted, became lord of Robin's land, and turned him into the world with an ass and a load of iron and pewter, to win his bread by. This ass was the creature he cared for, and he pleaded hard to have it brought to the fireside at Howeboddom; "for, bating the

bray," he said, "it could demean itself better than some Christians."

There was an equal number of deranged women. The first, and the noisiest, was Nannie Simm; she was always scolding, save when eating, and then she held a staff in her hand with which she beat time to the motion of her lips; Peggie Casey was the second; though old, she was still good looking, and active both in mind and body. We say mind—for, if drink could be kept from Peggie, or Peggie from drink—she was at once wise, witty, and sagacious; but, the moment liquor entered her mouth, she seemed inspired by the demon of contradiction and mischief; she leaped, she danced, she talked, and she sung, while all that she said, as well as all that she sung, was satirically aimed at those around; for she knew everybody, and could draw their characters with equal discernment and drollery. The third was Nelly Caird; she never was seen to smile, and she never spoke without complaining of hunger; she ate and drank till she alarmed her entertainers, and then declared she was starving, and kept together by a belt; yet the belt was always loose. The fourth was a lady-looking person, of middle life;—who sighed at every step, went bareheaded winter and summer, and was for many years accompanied by a couple of sheep, which she called her lambs—they lived as she lived, and often lay all night with her in the fields; no one knew her name, but all called her "the Lady."

Such was the company in Howeboddom. There were others, however, who, if not mad, were oddities in their way. First, there was Dominie Milligan, who placed himself beside Jeanie Rabson, and, to entertain her, entered into the history of the Carthaginians, to which the heiress listened with some attention, believing them to be a wild sept of people who lived in the Roons of Galloway, and brought the honey of that Hybla of Caledonia to perfection. Secondly, there was Nickie Neevison, who entered with a laugh, crying, "Where's Morison Roldan!—he'll never rhyme mair: I can beat him a' to sticks at riving the words to gaur them clink. What do you think I have done, Jeanie Rabson? I went to Drumdrousie house, and speered for the gowk and the titlin; our twa learned, philosophical, and critical friends, as the laird calls them—ye need na glower that way, dominie, I have used the right words;—weel, ye see, out they came, and I becked and put on a hypocritical mouth, and tauld them that I had got a capital auld ballant for them, worth ten of the stuff I so rashly burnt: and what d'ye think I did? I raved out a lang screed o' rhyme of my ain making—as sure as ye're there, Jeanie—they swallowed it like sweet milk; Braunks repeated it as I repeated it; Blynders wrote it down as if it had been a judgment o' the fifteen, and the laird cried, 'Wondrous!' Am na I clever!—O, sly, inventive, revengeful Nickie Neevison!"

"Woman!" said the dominie, "ye have done an indiscreet thing; first, ye have told an untruth to two learned, philosophical, and critical gentlemen; and secondly, ye have passed off your own ravings upon them for the genuine inspiration of the muse; thereby spreading a false report, and bringing discredit upon the genius of the district. Woman! how know ye that you have not prevented me from laying before them, even at Drumdrousie house, the first book of my own epic poem, on the woes which are prophesied to fall on Scotland when certain natural events happen!—there is to be a battle, to which that of Armageddan will be but as a cockfight. What saith True Thomas!

"When Solway Flow shall take to the sea,
The battle of the Sorrooyke Moor shall be."

"And a braw poem you have written, dominie," said Nickie, who heard of it now for the first time. "A braw poem, and a soothing; I was gaun by yere house ae night when ye were receeting it;—O! yon's the poetry, Jeanie Rabson; when ye court sleep, and canna find it, send for the dominie: if the first sax lines dinna bring down yere eelids, then his verse winna do for you what it did for me."

"Woman, woman!" exclaimed the exasperated dominie, "you are made of nothing but untruths."

"Then I am the better poet, dominie; thank ye for the compliment; now, man, if ye could just compliment Jeanie Rabson there as cleverly, ye kenna what might happen at Howeboddom; heiress, he looks unco kirr, take tent of your heart."

"Who talks of tining hearts!" exclaimed Kipp Cairns. "I tint a fair estate; the man who got it planted it all with nettles and thorns, and I canna get to the door of my ain house without tearing my silk stockings."

"Flint, fire, hell, and Hades!" shouted John Tamson. "What's the sting of a nettle and the jag of a thorn to the scorching of eternal fire! I see it!—I see it!—there it burns and rages! I'll haud Manting Will owre't till the buckles melt in his shoon!"

"Ye see into hell!" said Robin Wightman; "tell me, dinna ye see the saul of Writer Jock roasting in't! If ye dinna see that, ye are looking into the wrang place."

"D'ye see ony roast meat!" said Nelly Caird; "I havena tasted food this fortnight: I'm falling asunder; I think I could eat it, even if auld Clootie himself had turned the spit."

"Will ye tell me, John," said Kipp Cairns, in a mild, inquiring voice, "if ye see purgatory! It should be near hell, ye ken."

"I see nothing," exclaimed the madman, starting up, and looking fearfully down; "I see nothing but one boundless

blazing pit; I hear nothing but the groans of the tortured. Hark! did ye no hear a voice crying, Come, John Tamson, there's blude on your hand; come and wash it in boiling brimstone!"

"If ye see only a boundless blazing pit," said Kipp Cairns, "then the stake-and-ryse dike between hell and purgatory is burnt down; and what will become of Lady Winifred Roldan when it's a' ae pit?"

"I never saw so many daft fowk together before," said Peggy Casey, in a tone of offended wisdom; "Howeboddom, if ye winna rebuke them into silence, I maun do it." She rose as she spoke, and extending her hands, called with a loud voice, "From this hour till that of supper, let all those that are wise close their mouths, and let all those that are daft open them: we have had of wisdom sufficient for ae night." She sat down, and all approved.

All this time the laird of Howeboddom sat motionless in a large arm-chair, fashioned for his great-grandfather out of a solid oak-tree, found fifteen feet deep in Howeboddom morass: the hands which made it were equally familiar with scripture as with edge-tools, for there were sand-glasses, and swords, and brief texts, scattered wherever space was afforded; nay, in the panel behind, a Bible lay open at the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; so that, wherever the occupier turned himself, he either saw or felt something holy. The laird seemed unconscious of all these things; nor did he for once glance his eye above him, where whole sides of bacon, hams spiced and dried, and more savoury morsels still, such as tongues and tender mutton hams, were neatly papered; and ell long staves of thorn, ash, and oak, for souples to flails, hung orderly, row above row; while among the whole, the smoke from a fire of mingled peat and wood streamed freely, on its way to the open air. He sat; nor heeded the company assembling around him further than, when a new guest was admitted, he would say, "Come away, Bankhead;" "I'm glad to see you, Maryfield;" "This is a fine Hallowmass, Boatrigg; how's the lasses? Ay, there they are, God bless them!" From his frequent glances towards the door, it was plain that he looked for some one who had not yet come; the door opened, but his solicitude was not rewarded. "Come away, John Anderson; and come here, Pennie Hudlestane; and come near me, Mattie Anderson—nae marvel that they ca' ye bonnie." The guests sat down, but still the laird looked towards the door. At length he could keep quiet no longer: "What's become of the bairn?" he said; "Jeanie Rabson, are ye sure that ye invited the boy?"

"He'll be here belyve, laird," said Jeanie; "he'll be here belyve. Ye maun ken, sirs, that it is Morison Roldan that my brither ca's the bairn; he's nae bairn now, weel I wot,

a handsome lad, wi' a winning tongue, and a glance that s mae hearts than ane gae starting. Is na that true, Mat-Anderson ?"

The young woman thus unexpectedly appealed to gave her head a toss east and her head a toss west, and with a gleam on her rosy face, said, "Ye maun ask at them that mair in him than I do." She seemed prepared to say more, but her mother, the aforesaid Pennie, took the word of her mouth. "Ye say weel, Mattie, my lass : I dinna lik them that first likened my daughter, wha, wi' a' her s, came honestly into the world—that likened my daughter, I say, wha has money o' her ain and expectancies frae her uncle, besides sureties frae us—wi' a penniless lad, born on the wrang side o' the blanket." She had risen a little up to give impulse to her words ; and on concluding them, she came down with a soss that made the chair creak. Jeanie Rabson looked at the laird, the laird looked at Jeanie—both were ready to speak, but the laird spoke first.

He sat upright in his chair, to give force to his words. What need for a' this scorn ! My bairn Morison's shadow picture ; the like o' him for looks and ability is no in country-side. Na doubt the Fourmerkland is a pretty place, but I trow the Howeboddum is a bonnier ; and the one o' the latter, and that shall be Morison, may haud up her head wi' the heirress o' the former ony day between ane and Beltane : what need is there for a' this scorn !"

As he concluded the door opened, and Morison entered, shaking the snow from his hat. "Ye come the last, and in winter wi' ye, my bairn," said the laird ; "come up to my right hand here—there, now ! how hale ye look ; study ye bewilder yere brain as it did mine. Dominie, yere father's a credit to you, I'm tauld—but a truce wi' further chit-chat. Jeanie—Jeanie Rabson, wherefore dinna ye bring out the dishes, wi' clean water and fowl ; the napps wi' ye, to have a dive ; the nuts, that lads and lasses may be served, and spell their fate ? I myself have the pock of money for adventurous hands to saw ; and I give ilka liberty to pouk my stacks, pou my kalestocks, and winnieweghts o' naething." As the laird spoke, the materials which superstitious or humorous belief wrought or needed to work miracles on Hallow-eve were produced ; and Dominie alone lifted up his voice against them. "Not," he said, "that I object to honest hilarity, or even to the but-sowens at supper ; but oh ! an ye be Christians, wherefore will ye tempt Providence by indulging in darksome ?"

the rites, dark or bright, the more youthful part of the company proceeded, evidently regarding Dominie Milligan's presence as a thing of course, to keep matters straight on his conscience. "I shall begin with what is near

my heart," said Pennie Hudlestane; "here's twa nuts, fair and comely: the tane represents Morison there, and the other Mattie Anderson; that they may burn sweetly and kindly, is the wish of my gudeman as well as me."

Morison, who remembered the scorn showered upon him both by mother and daughter, marvelled how this change had taken place; he looked at Mattie, and Mattie returned his glance with interest: and the goodman of the Fourmerkland looked at both, and seemed to regard them as his children.

"Ye may save yeresels the trouble of all this," said Nanse Halberson. "No that I object to the burning of twa nuts any more than to the eating of twa kernels, but Morison Roldan has anither destiny before him;—and no meaning disrespect to Mattie Anderson, who is baith rich and weel faured, and is aware of the same—the deer mauna lie down in the dog's hole; his is to be a brighter lot."

The goodman of Fourmerkland waxed wroth on this. "It's weel kenned, Nanse, that ye are uncannie, and naught gangs weel wi' either milkness or bestial, unless ye wish it. I call that forspeaking my bairn, and if ony ill happens to Mattie, ye had best look to it."

"She has already commenced wi' her cantraips on the nuts," said Pennie. "There! what a start and a fluff! she lies as quiet as a lamb, and he is up the chimley."

"Wha talks of cantraips?" said John Tamson, starting madly up; "and who seeks fortune in fire! O that ye had sic a heat at your heart as I have! a' the water of Tynron burn winna sloken't. Some gang to hell a thousand years after death; some step frae the deathbed into the burning brimstone, and some are there while they are in the body; and if onybody ask ye wha they are, ye may say John Tamson's ane o' them. D'ye see yon lang-backed black deevil, wi' een like lamps, and claws like muck dregs, looking down the lum! mony a time he has me on his back, and gaes laumping through the hottest dubs of perdition. Yet for a' that the red blude's on this hand." And he sat down, extending his hand over the embers till the skin cracked before he was stopped, saying, with a tone as if a millstone had been lifted from his bosom, "Ah! it's whiter now—it's whiter now, and the buxom bride canna refuse me for't."

While all were shocked with the words of the madman, and all eyes were on him, the outer door was swung suddenly against the wall;—a heavy step was heard on the floor, and before the form that approached was visible to all, a rough, loud, strange voice exclaimed, "I seek eight of my people; men say they are mad, but I say wicked—wicked; they are all of them sinners, and the weight that lies on their hearts, and makes them frantic, is sin. Listen till I call them, and note ye their ways, and see if my words

not those of wisdom." A strange tremour seemed to take all the eight mendicants at once ; nor was it allayed when the stranger stalked into the middle of the floor : he was bare-headed ; his hair was matted and long, and so was his beard ; he held a lantern in his hand, made out of a poplar turnip, and ever, as he moved it, the light which glimmered in it glimmered like that of his eyes, which were large and sunken. All saw he was mad ; but his face was unknown, even to the laird of Howeboddom.

"Where are my people," he exclaimed, "on a night when the angels which should be in hell are abroad ! ay, there ye are at a dooce man's board, as if ye were nae marked by the hand of Satan, and doomed for the pit. John Tamson, how ye sit there wi' the pedler's blood red on yere right hand, and three score of his silver crowns in your wallets ! I see ye understand. And ye, too, sit cosh beside him, garet Macdonald, whom the children call Casey. Where ye the garters, of a blue and white stripe, with which ye are girded yere babe !—I see ye understand. William Rorich, whom we call Manting Will, look up : the bleat of Howeboddom's sheep is still in your lug.—I see ye understand. And you, Helen Caird, whom boys call Nelly, come to the dishonour of an auld tune. Ye have often been in the hedge and the henroosts, when folk blamed the hens, and the tinkers were far away.—Ay, I see ye understand, too. Your turn's next—ye are the lady, that never wears a mutch, and wanders wi' the silly sheep as if ye were as innocent as when ye wandered among the lilies of the north gardens. I'll say nae mair—I see ye understand. And you, Robert Wightman, whom bairns call Yauping a, and dooce fowk condole wi' for the loss of the bonny-fairy-holm, I will neither nickname ye, nor condole wi' ye, when ye were rich ye were hard-hearted and closed wi' the poor and the needy ; and if God deprived ye your grounds, and gave them to a knave, because ye sold the widow and her three babes from your door on a winter night, and bade her find a bed among the wreaths of aw, where she was a stiff corse in the morning, wha can say that your afflictions are undeserved !"

"A soul spoke or stirred : the mad people cowered and shrank as hounds when whipped or rated ; even Nickie Ison was awed. She could only mutter, "Tis Hal-lass, and this maun be auld Cloots himsel, since he has a' things. Is he no done yet ! I wonder whether he will tell me daft or no. I have doubts on't mysel now and then."

He looked anxiously at the bench, and fixing his eyes on Cairns, stepped suddenly forward, seized him by the hand and hurrying him to a corner of the room, placed him in a chair, took a seat beside him, and with a loud laugh

said, "Man, ye pozed us! On Hallowmass-eve the power is given to me to see the evil deeds which the seed of man commit written on their brows; there's naught of the kind written on thine. Ye are neither more nor less than a fool, and yere seat should be with the righteous. James Rabson of Howeboddum, wherefore d'ye no come and greet your guest!—I am the spirit that appeared to Brutus, and promised to meet him at Philippi: I am he who appeared to James Stuart in Stirling, and warned him of Flodden: and, lastly, I am the dark and evil shape that follows in the steps of the Roldans, rejoicing when they err, and awaiting release from earth in the downfall of their house and name."

"Spirit or man—or God or devil," said Morison Roldan, springing up and confronting the stranger, "I shall know who you are before we part. Ye say ye rejoice in the errors of my name, and await the downfall of my house that ye may be released from earth—explain your words: they are a mystery."

"I am a mystery as well as my words," answered the stranger. "Know ye not, young man, that two spirits, one of evil and one of good, have charge of the house of Roldan? The barons of that name have sometimes dared to evoke and question them. The bright spirit can only be seen in the Ladye Chapel, on the first night of the full moon of July; but the bad spirit can be seen always. Would you know more?"

"You have told me nothing that I have not heard before," said Morison; "but God pity you! so far from being aught superhuman, I see you are less than man; a poor mad creature, escaped from restraint to scare others till they go as mad as yourself."

"I am a spirit," said the stranger, "and on this eve I am permitted to come abroad. I have walked the quicksands of Solway—my feet are wet. I have glided over the shaking-bogs of Locher—see, I caught this jack-a-lantern: and I lighted on the schoolhouse-top, and called on the name of John Milligan; but there was a dumb silence, and the voice of learning was mute in the land."

Dominie Milligan seemed recalled by these words from a sort of trance; he muttered, "It's him, and it's no him, and yet it's him too." And, rising and coming forward, said, "If ye are a spirit, sit still and say naught; but if ye are Willie of Starryheugh, speak to me, for I am John Milligan."

A cloud seemed to be lifted from the stranger at once; the wild excitement of his looks departed; he passed his hands over his brow, and smiting his knees with his palms, and stooping his head upon them, appeared to shudder;—he looked up, and said, "William was my name once, and

arryhough was my habitation ; but my name now is Plot-
 ck, and my home is in a damp cavern, and, instead of
 oves on my hands and silk stockings on my legs, I wear
 nds of iron ; and for the sound of Greek or Latin song, I
 ar cursing and swearing ; and, though a spirit myself, I
 beaten by one stronger, and whipped till the flesh seems
 rting from my bones."

" Alas !" said the dominie, mournfully, to Morison, " be-
 ld the brightest of all Scotland's scholars ; in the race of
 ne he was foiled by one not half so swift as himself, but
 o had the god Mammon for his partner ; the upshot is a
 dhouse—chains and stripes. But come home, even now,
 h me, my poor unhappy friend ; thou art as harmless as
 breeze of May ;—thou shalt live with me, and during
 weary nights we shall sing a Greek song together—my
 ildren will not harm one from whom we may all derive
 ormation."

The dominie took him by the hand, and as he led him un-
 isting away, the laird of Howeboddum said, " I shall
 ble the dues I owe the school for this ; but I trow, for a
 e, I thought he was na in the body, but was a spirit, ay,
 a black ane."

" I aye thought I kenned him," said Nickie Neevison ;
 it daft here or daft there, he kens mair than he ought to
 ; what fine characters he drew of our feal friends ayont
 fire there ! By my troth, Howeboddum, ye keep queer
 pany. But how wiselike he talked about the twa spir-
 of the house of Roldan ! Nanse Halberson, ye ken all
 gs—what say ye to the guardian spirits ? This is just
 night to talk about them."

" I hae my ain doubts," said Nanse, gravely, " anent the
 ane ; but concerning the bright ane there's na doubt.
 appears, for it's a ladye-spirit, to all whose veins are
 med with the blade of Roldan, and shows them their fu-
 fate—whilk means that she points out the path to glory
 honour, and to ruin and perdition, then lets them
 se."

" That's awsome ! but, Nanse, does the spirit come in the
 ress of a woman ?" inquired Jeanie Rabson.

" Atweel, does she," answered the other, " and a bonnie
 an too ; Mattie Anderson there's well faured, but she's
 unkie to a star compared wi' the ladye-spirit of the
 e of Roldan."

" Away wi' yere comparisons, ye uncannie limmer," said
 ie Hudlestane, sharply ; " d'ye think that a shape of
 nshine, or a creature formed o' ragwort, is equal to a
 ie lass of warm flesh and blood ?"

" My words are true, nevertheless, gudewife," said Nanse ;
 I Morison there, where he sits sae cozie, whispering
 our daughter, will prove it before his teens are done."

"Ay," said the goodwife, "young flesh and blood will e'en draw together; we were ance young ourselves, Nanse, lass, and loved to run round the corn-ricks, and scream, that ane we liked might catch us."

"I mind o' nae sic pranks," said the goodman of Fourmerkland; "ye maun hae screamed, Pennie, to other grips than mine."

"The laird's in his tantrums now, Nanse; but naeboddy minds him mair nor me," whispered Pennie; "I keep the keys, lass; sae come yere ways up ony forenoon ye like to Fourmerkland, and ye shall carry hame as mickle butter and cheese as yere back can bear. I'm saying, let thae young things blaw in ilk other's lugs there, and should there be ony thing rising to cross their love, will ye stop it, or tell me o't—we a' ken, Nanse, that yere wiser than other people."

"What is to be maun come to pass," said Nanse; "I shall cast na cantraips atweel to spill the love o' twa kindly young things; but what's to be the fate of Morison the spirit of his fathers will tell him, and that soon."

The youthful pair were now left to themselves, and, seated side by side, conversed without interruption. It cannot be denied that Morison had a sort of hankering regard for the heiress of Fourmerkland, nor had the maiden, till of late, shown any disinclination for his company. The change in his favour had been wrought to-night by the declaration of the laird of Howeboddum; the hopes of such a fair inheritance could not be resisted, and Morison, though born, as Pennie said, on the wrong side of the blanket, was at once invested with all the qualities which a farm worth five hundred a year, and bills and bonds, and money laid out at interest, could bestow. For a while he wondered at the affectionate looks and soft and yielding words of his mistress; but he saw they were not dissembled, and he repaid them with looks and language such as seldom fail to succeed when they come from the handsome and the wealthy.

"Mattie," he said, "I am poor; but I am young; and my hand is ready, and my head is none of the dullest, and what I want in wealth I shall make up in love."

"Morison," answered the maiden, "ye are rich enough for me; when I sat aside ye in the school, and ye were helping me with my lesson—though I was nae sae dull of the uptake as Tibbie Wilson and Kate Macturk—I thought then how weel ye would look should it sae happen that ye were to become maister of the Fourmerkland. Even now I can beat my mother in weighing the butter sharp and the wool scrimp in the scale, and she says I am sneller than herself in managing the sillar."

"But, Mattie," said Morison, "ye must not let this desire of gain outrun what is just; ye should give down weight,

the wife of Auchan-gibbard, wha put one leg of a pair two-pound tongs in the scale and let the other hang out an she weighed a pound of butter."

"That's aye your way, Morison," said the maiden; "ye'er will speak seriously about ony thing; but I'm serious. What may be the worth of Howeboddom annually, k ye! and how muckle money has the laird and Jeanie out at interest? It's no that I care, but I am interested our friends, ye ken."

"These are matters which I have never inquired into," said he; "all that I know is, that Jeanie Rabson has one o' the kindest hearts, and the laird aye o' the freest hands; I Glengarnock. Much, much, Mattie, have they done since I remember; and what must they have done before I remember, when I was a helpless bairn in my mither's lap, and she had no friend save God and Jeanie on!"

"I marvel ye dinna think of marrying Jean Rabson yerrince ye think sa mickle on her," said the heiress of Morkland, with a toss of her head.

"I couldna love her mair," said Morison, "were we to be ed the morn; but she never intends to marry, she says; her brother never intends to marry, which is a pity: few o' them are scarce in the land."

"Tha talks o' marrying?" said Kipp Cairns; "didna I see the broad mains o' Kappenock, just because I was an awre lang in asking the bonnie lass o' Lowrie-hole? I hae married wha I like ainsyne, but there's nae love first love, sae I gang single; but I can tell ye I have h to do: there's the lady o' Scrimpington—she look- n e yesterday; ye never saw sic looks!"

"I gie an advice, bairn," said Peggie Casey; "love's a ed fire, and ye may burn yere hands when ye but o' heating them: wherefore do I not marry? I hae f offers, but when the names are asked in the kirk, a sh voice cries aye, 'Never wed wi' ane that wears blue uite garters'—I ken what that means;" and she hid e in her hands.

"When ye want siller," said John Tamson, "to set up wi', dinna gang to a pedler for't; for if ye gie him a e owre mickle in the getting it, he'll haunt ye a' yere there, I see him now! there's as mickle blude rinnin' iis bosom as wad turn a mill. Flint, fire, hell, and men are all sinners by nature, and sinners by prac- and the jaws of that fiery leviathan, the pit, are gaping low us up!"

"I wish the buttered sowens were ready," said Nelly "I havana tasted God's living these three weeks; I l asunder were it no for this band!"

"I wish of the ravenous mendicant was gratified: a

meal, the smoke of which was enough, Nickie Neevison declared, to supper the rattons in the thatch, soon appeared on the board ; a grace, suddenly pronounced by one of the madmen—" Ram horns apiece, and elbow-room," was the indecorous signal to fall on, and not a word was said, though a score of mouths were open, for a quarter of an hour at least. As the company rose to depart, " Take care," said the laird of Howeboddom, " as ye gang through the Foul-sykes ; something has aye been seen there on Hallowmass-eve since Joe Dingwall was murdered by Rab Johnston the tinker ; and take heed as ye skirt Lagnane wood ; the tree's still there on which Christy Sautpowks pat down himself—the branch, ye will see't, owrehangs the road—and folk threep, as the night comes round, they see his form hanging atween them and the blue sky."

" Ye hae forgotten, laird," said Nickie Neevison, " to warn them against crossing the Pennystane burn ;—in the very hōwe of the glen, where the hoodie craw biggs, didna douce Walter Irving find a green table covered with fine meats, and fragrant wi' wine, wi' four-and-twenty fairies carousing—and was he ever the same man again after he drank of the Elfland wine?"

" And I warn ye a'—mair especially ye Fourmerkland folk," said Nanse Halberson, " to walk warily over the Pennystane-craft ; if there's a witch in a' the south, she is sure to be there, and may gie some of ye a ride as far as the moon."

" O, Jean," said the laird to his sister when alone, " what a twofold lesson have we had this blessed night ! I canna tell whether maist to pity these bereaved creatures now stretched on their sacks and strae, or the laird of Fourmerkland. How he lap, like a cock at a grozel—him, and wife, and daughter, when we hinted that Morison was be laird of Howeboddom : they are a selfish race and a warldly."

CHAPTER IX.

" But warily tent when ye come to court me,
And come na unless the back yett be aje ;
Then up the back stile, and let naeboddy see,
And come as ye werena coming to me."

BURNS.

WHEN Morison and the young heiress of Fourmerkland arrived at the place where the roads sundered towards their different homes, their conversation had grown of a confidential nature.

"If ye are na afraid," said the maiden, "of the cloud of night, and the lonesome road, ye might find yere way to Fourmerkland on Monday night—but, now that I think on't, we had better say Tuesday. There's aye a light at my window till late—the wee window that looks up the burn. I have the accounts of the day to sort, and the results of bargains to set down. But ye are na heeding what I say. Mind now that my mother's but-light-sleepit, sae walk softly, and dinna come brainging at the front gate, but slide cannily in by the kale-yard slap. Will ye mind a' this, now?"

It was no needless question that the heiress asked. Morison heard her as if he heard her not; he was in truth considering whether he had not better, with one who promised to be so close and selfish, to come to a clearance in courtship at once; but the night and hour of tryste being named, he could not, without affronting her whom he dreaded he could not love, decline the interview; he accepted it, bade good night, and hastened home to the Elfin-glen.

We are afraid that not a few of our readers—for we trust this true history will find many—will be inclined to think slightly both of Morison's head and heart when they are informed that, when Monday night came, he began to prepare for the tryste with Mattie Anderson. They will one and all exclaim, "Tuesday night—the heiress said Tuesday night," and so no doubt she did; but the wooer, from reasons we have assigned, only heard Monday night named, and so faintly that it seemed to him as a dream: he had a vague notion, too, that Tuesday was also mentioned; but he said to himself, "The road is short to nimble feet like mine, and the light at her window—I am right, I am right, I know, in that—will settle all." On Monday Morison began to prepare for his visit. All who have felt the ardour of young enthusiastic love need not be informed that he did not wait till night for such preparation; long before the sun sunk down to the hill, he had looked down from the glen-head at the line of road—tried on, shifted, and tried again, various parts of dress, and thought his neckcloth more reluctant than he ever found it before to take a handsome tie. His hair he shook back and combed forward, and though nature had so disposed it that no mistaken labour could altogether hurt its waving beauty, he gave up the arrangement in despair, and not without a smile at his own vanity.

The sun sunk slowly—slower, indeed, than Morison ever remembered it; the moon had arisen—her horns were half filled, and there was a storm intimated in her looks, for it did not escape him that she lay almost on her back, and shone gloomy and watery. His mother, who had no idea of his tryste, added to his anxiety by a flow of conversation concerning the ancient warriors of the house of Morison;

and though she observed that he did not listen with his usual attention to deeds of arms, reaching from days when "gude King Robert rang," to the "fatal Forty-five," she talked away, never suspecting that she had not a faithful listener.

She made a full pause at the end of the family history, and said, "Morison, I am proud of your looks, though I shouldna be sae, seeing they are an accident of nature; but I am prouder of your mind, which is every day growing more and more manly. The feelings of your time of life—for ye will be seventeen at Beltane—are, I can perceive, coming on you, for you are more careful of your dress, and more anxious about your person, than formerly; though, blessed be the Maker, you were never amiss: now, my dear bairn, let one admonish ye who has dearly earned the right, to be careful of the company ye keep. I dinna mean the lads; ye are unco weel that way in a' respects, save that boy Davie Gellock, whom I suspect will turn out a ne'er-do-weel;—but I mean the maidens, Morison, my love; O, dinna throw yere young heart away to some giglet wi' blue een, and sunny hair, and an aere of peatmoss; the first love is seldom weel and wisely placed; look twice afore ye loup: dinna make a promise that will ruin ye in the keeping; but lay out yere love on a young creature with a kind heart;—she ought to be bonnie, too—and if she has siller, she winna be the waur. Gude night, my bairn, and mind what a mother has said."

Morison retired—for it was nigh the hour of rest—to his little chamber; he heard his mother bolt the door, and also pray that he might be delivered from the tempter now, when his hour of trial was nigh; he also heard her pray that it might not be God's will that he should fall in love with one above his degree—as one—and sorely was she punished for it—had done. What she desired was a young, weel-faured, virtuous, thrifty quean, who would keep the house in order, and haud gear together.

Morison smiled, and thought that Mattie Anderson was made to suit; he opened the window with a careful hand, slipped into the open air, and making his way to the hill-side, looked by the light of the moon far and wide over Glengarnock.

As he passed a scathed oak, where the road branched away to the castle of Roldan, a voice cried, "Ah, Morison, lad! whither away so fast!—but I can guess—ye have a tryste wi' the muse, and ye are gaun to seek her at the Fourmerkland."

"Nanse Halberson," said Morison, with a blush and a smile, "if Pennie Hudlestane had heard ye say that, she would have called ye a witch of a guesser. But I am come out to indulge in my own thoughts; I aye think they rise higher when all sounds save those of the wind or the stream

are asleep. Ye are gaun hame and have a burden—let me carry it."

The burden was transferred to Morison. "But ye mauna take such lang steps," said Nanse, "gif ye want me to haud up wi' you—ye are owre yauld for me. Ye'll want now to ken what a witch's burden is made of—listen, and I sall tell thee. First, there's a cheese, a piece of cauld crud I doubt, which was gien me by the gudeman of Grupemleg, to be considerate wi' his bestial; there's a gude pint of honey—nane of Dominie Milligan's shilpit southern pints, whilk he teaches ye in the school, but a gracious Scotch pint—gien me, too, hy the kind open hand of Jeanie Rabson: then there's meal warm frae the mill-ee; barley as gude as ever was wat wi' water; and a full half-stane of beef, all frae the liberal hand of the gudewife of Netherholm. This is ane of my days of lifting kane. The honey was a come-be-chance, and is owre and aboon bargain."

"Really, Nanse," said Morison, laughing, "ye are quite a princess, and the people of Glengarnock are your subjects—what more could a queen have!"

"Indeed, and that's true," she said. "But O, consider, lad! it comes mair from fear than affection—but here's the sindrins of the roads; gie me back my burden, and then for a parting word. Now, Morison, my bairn—I aye ca' ye my bairn—and if it was na for my evil repute, I wish ye were. In the first place, d'ye see yon moon? she has a tempest in her arms, and will thraw it forth, and that wi' vengeance: now look yonder, where there's three fair stars—d'ye ken what they are looking down on!"

"They are right above the Ladye Chapel," said Morison; "and see, one of them has fallen—how beautifully it shot, making all the hills and woods gleam!"

"Ye are right, it is owre the Ladye Chapel—now, Morison, Lord of Roldan—ay, and higher than that, if ye guide yere natural genius right—think of the weird of your name—the spirit you wot of has yet to cross your path: ye will see her before your teens are out, else ye are na your father's son." She went on her way as she spoke, and Morison, glad to be released from her restraint, but marvelling at her words, hastened towards Fourmerkland.

But, though Morison was swift of foot, the storm fairly outran him. The stars seemed suddenly blotted out; the wind came with an angry and then an angrier gust; rain began to patter among the shrunken leaves, but, not satisfied with such a sprinkling, it rushed down from the clouds at once, making the fields smoke and sparkle in the vehemence of its descent.

Morison muttered, "I think it is written that every obstacle this land can oppose is to stand in the way of my tryste to-night. First, the love of my mother; secondly,

the meeting with cannie Nanse, as they call her; and now this storm;—but a wetting is no more to me than dew is to a flower." Of this dew he was likely to have abundance, for the whole heaven was now as black as ink; the firmament of clouds resting on the line of hills bellied down into the valley, and seemed to swallow it up. The sea, however, was silent—or, rather, could not be heard, for the rising roar of the moorland streams.

To Morison the storm, though he accused it of an intent to impede his journey, was welcome rather than otherwise. A drenching was not to be regarded by one exposed as he had been to the free descent of the elements from his childhood. A shepherd or a hind after a soaking seems dry and comfortable compared to a citizen so exposed; the latter shrinks at the visitation, and looks like a drenched hen under a water-cart, while the other comes out of the shower unscathed, like a duck from the stream. There were other reasons for his not taking the storm greatly to heart. "Well, blow your best and rain your worst," he said, "it will show Mattie Anderson that I am true to my word, and ready to brave any thing for her sake. I like Mattie—she smiled on me when others frowned; and though there is something like selfishness about her, her love for me cannot be so: she is an heiress, and what, alas! am I! a poor landless, birthless being. She has noble feelings, since her love can triumph over such impediments."

As he uttered these last words he started back, and gazed with horror in his looks, and well he might. He had set his foot on the end of the Routan-bridge, so called from the continual din and roar of the water some seventy feet below, and was about to step forward, when the massive arch vanished from before him, and, plunging into the boiling chasm, threw up the flood and foam as high as the surrounding hills, and uttered a roar which was heard through a dozen glens. The sudden flooding of the brook—it was little better—had shaken the masonry, for the bridge was new; and of all the beautiful structure which seemed suspended by magic over the stream, nothing remained but a single ring of arch stones, surmounted by the parapet. Morison eyed it for a moment: then, springing on the wall, ran nimbly along the line of stone, and reaching the end, sprang full fifteen feet forward, and alighting among the grass, turned round with something of a shudder at the danger he had dared. His danger had been greater than he imagined; the parapet, which trembled under his feet as he rushed across it, was now loosening and losing its balance: and Morison in after life was heard to declare, that he never felt real terror but at that bridge of dread, when he saw the very way over which he had ventured vanish like a wreath of mist, and plunge into the foaming caldron below.

He paused but for a moment, and making his way to Fourmerkland, entered the garden by the appointed gate; groped his way with difficulty to the house, led by a faint line of light which issued from Mattie's window. He took off his plaid, which, coiled round his body shepherd fashion, had kept him dry to the knees, and arranging his dress with as much care as might be, where he had utter darkness for his glass, and a kaleyard for his chamber, he laid his hand on the latch of the back door, and was about to go in, when he saw a figure enter by the way which he had come, to whose feet the path seemed familiar. The dove knows the hawk when but newly escaped from the shell, with its gorlin down upon it, and attacks it at once; the hen knows the fox when blind and but a week old, and raises her wings and attacks with neb and spur. Morison could not at the moment name the person who now almost reached him, but he felt he was a foe—that undefined feeling—that repulsive sensation—which intimates an enemy, came upon him; he turned round, and advanced upon the intruder at once.

This unlooked-for adventurer, probably imagining Morison to be one of the hinds of the house, retreated at first with the fleetness of a greyhound; through kale-rows and gooseberry-bushes he dashed without hesitation, and shutting the wicket behind him, escaped to the lawn, or rather field, and seemed disposed to retreat no farther. Morison, whose blood was up—for he now perceived that his opponent was young, and probably a rival—leaped over the garden fence, and made at once to his adversary; the latter fled again, and made for the wood, which, descending from the hills, skirted the valley, and, by its thick undergrowth of holly, afforded protection to whatever creature courted it. Morison, whose celerity of foot was remarkable, came almost within touch of the other, when, turning a thick roan of bushes, there stood a horse, with a rough burly hind holding the bridle. As the fugitive mounted, Morison seized him by the foot, and heaved him headlong into the bushes of bramble and stubbed thorn on the other side; he then bestowed a blow on the horse, which caused it to bolt forward, prostrating the hind who held it, and who had hitherto stood gaping wide, but saying nothing.

Having accomplished this feat, Morison hastened back, entered the kaleyard, opened the back door, which he found on the latch, and with a foot which even the jealous ear of a mother could not detect, ascended to the room where Mattie awaited him. She had been listening for his coming;—she opened her chamber door, then stepped back, and even made a motion as if to shut it. He either did not perceive this, or took no notice of it, but, folding her in his arms, imprinted one kiss at least on her lips, and whis-

pered, "Heaven and earth seemed united to prevent me keeping tryste. Mattie, you look as if you did not expect that I could have braved three miles of wild road on a wild night—with witches to stay me, and broken briggs to mar me—but here I am, and here is more than reward;" and he kissed her again.

Mattie, if she had lost her composure by this sudden, and, as it appeared, unexpected apparition of her lover, regained it in a moment, and said, "This is not Tuesday at e'en, Morison; but no matter, ye aye liked to be head of the class and foremost in the race; there, ye see, I have not been forgetful; the way is lang and the weather rough; sit down and warm ye at the fire, and cheer yersel with creature comforts." She pointed to a chair beside the small but glowing fire, and to a little table on which some household delicacies were placed.

Morison smiled and said, "Some lovers might be tempted by the sweet things of your table, but I care only for yourself; so set these dainties aside; I did not come here to taste and speak of your wine or of your honey—he that loves deeply and passionately has food enough."

Mattie opened the window and looked out on the night; "The wind and the rain have passed away," she said, "but there is thunder and fire coming—Morison, this is a fearful night to come trysting in;" she closed the casement as she spoke, but listened as if she dreaded the coming of some one.

"No one can enter, love, for I know the use of a bolt—and should your mother come—"

"O, I'll manage my mother," said Mattie, respiring as if a hundred weight had been lifted from her heart.

They sat looking on each other for a little space; Morison spoke first. "Mattie," he said, with hesitation, "I know it is a custom with the young women of this and other valleys to hold tryste with various lovers; some, that they may have the pleasure of reckoning a dozen in their train; and others, that they may weigh the worth of each, and make a choice among them."

"O, yes," replied Mattie, with a smile, "there's Bessie Howatson, she counts nae less than a score, and had them all round her supper-table at once. There's Tibbie Freysel has nineteen lads, and ane they ca' the chaser, who follows her wherever she goes. As for me, I maun make two or three do—it's no every ane that the heiress of Fourmerkland will draw up wi'!" and she gave her head a prideful toss, and looked on Morison as if not quite sure of the propriety of making him one of the elect.

"So, then," said Morison, with a smile, "I am afraid I have deprived you of one whom you wished to see—thrust myself unwittingly upon an honour not designed for me—two came to the door, but only one got in."

Mattie hardly knew how to take this, but soon made up her mind. "Weel, now, ye are mair than the deevil they call ye; ye not only come on the night that ye shouldna, but ye fley awa some poor admirer who came to make a survey of the house by moonlight, number the windows, draw a circle round the place that holds his treasure, and dream of what he couldna obtain. I find I maun make ye dree penance. Hout! that's nae penance, unless my lips were as hard as auld Nanse Halberson's."

"I am afraid," said Morison, "that I have done a worse turn than scare away a penniless lover; his saddle-horse and silver mountings, Mattie, such as glitter in lasses' ean, betokened a wealthy wooer."

"Na, na," said Mattie, "the lad ye allude to is nae easily scared; and, bold as ye are, and accustomed to domineer, and willing with baith tongue and hand, ye wadna be so rash as to venture a tousele wi' him;" and she tossed her head, snuffed the air, and shifted on her seat, loosening Morison's arm, which by this time encircled her waist, and pushing him from her, looked on him at arm's length.

"Women only judge of matters as they wish them," said Morison, "and it's natural enough for you to thirk a lover a hero; but let that pass—he that has got a fine horse and a servant, though he has two or three miles to ride, may bear a small disappointment; it would have been a more painful thing for me, Mattie, had I walked three rough miles in vain. But I am on the right side of the door, and the lad of the blood-horse and silver bridle is on the wrong; so let me be thankful, and make the most of my time, before Mattie Anderson recovers from her surprise of giving audience to the wrong ambassador of the little demon whom Dominie Milligan calls Dan Cupid."

"And what wad Roger say, an' he could speak?" questioned the damsel, in the words of Ramsay; "if ye feel as ye say, why be thankful; I did wrong in carrying away the warm supper, which I had so painfully prepared; are ye the lover in the old song!—"

"And never a blythe styme wad he blink,
Until his wame was fou'."

"Why, then, Mattie, I would say that one real lover is worth half a dozen coming and going ones, wad Tibbie Freysel's chaser to boot:—and more, that such indulgences, though innocent enough, give a character of lightness and lack of feeling to those who permit them; and further still, that those only who love one can hope to be warmly loved in return."

"Weel spoken, Dominie Roldan," said Mattie, "and it's just for that ae real true love that I am seeking; I will pass the lads of the district, such as I think likely and weel con-

hawket cow it came from—but I can guess—the ground is worth a bonnie yearly pennie. Let me see:—there's the forty-acre field, called the Fleucharpark; the thirty-acre ditto, called Mitchelcrook; the five-and-forty ditto, named Culberttharris; the Reedhowm, twenty acre gude—all arable land—bearing capital wheat, and lying kindly to the sun. Then there's of pasturage as much as enables the laird to send two thousand lambs to Lockerby fair, and sell of butter, and cheese, and wool, and black cattle, more than my arithmetic can reach. If it's worth a bawbee, Howeboddum is worth sax hundred pound per annum after the harrows have cleared the teeth—no a penny less. Its a bonnie down-sitting."

Morison, who regarded the praise of those he esteemed as a polite way of paying attention to himself, cordially concurred in all that Mattie said, but added that he had never heard one word about the annual worth of the lairdship; nay, he did not even know the various plough-worthy fields, with the names and measurements of which his companion seemed so well acquainted. "Morison," said Mattie, "ye are owre meikle in the clouds—ye mauna aye be ballad-making; it winna do—and if it does at all, it will be because ye may have the good fortune to get a wife who will render thought on your part less necessary. Will sangs as lang as Robin Hood, think ye, stock the howes and knowes whilk will come into your possession! It wasna by repeating Chevy Chase, and blads of Willie Wallace, or scenes out of that liefu'like book, the Gentle Shepherd, that my father stocked Fourmerkland, and made his daughter an heiress."

"Mattie," said Morison, "the thistle bears no roses, and ye cannot gather geans from the bramble; I have grown up with no better adviser than my own beloved mother, whose sense of wrongs has imbittered her life, and thrown a shade over mine. I am therefore stiff and self-willed; books, both in prose and verse, have been for many a year almost my sole companions, and I have not yet found better—at least, not till within this hour."

"There, now, ye are at yere compliments again!" exclaimed Mattie, with some impatience of manner; "have I not told ye that ye canna draw the black clout o'er my ee with yere fine sayings! I wadna gie half a dozen real facts for a speech that wad gae round Glengarnock. It seems unaccountable to me that ye ken nae mair about Howeboddum than ye do about the moon; and less, I do believe—for I have seen ye glower at her for a full hour, as if she were fit for pasturage, and ye were portioning her into grass-parks."

"It seems strange to me, now, Mattie, that you should demand this knowledge of Howeboddum at my hand; but I can guess—ye have included the laird in your calculations,

and wish to weigh him in the balance : he is a rich man, and little the worse of the wear."

"Deed, no, Morison," replied she; "not that I dinna think James Rabson a worthy man, and companion meet for any man's daughter in the district; but his heart has na been at hame for these aughteen years and mair. Thousands have seen him as well as me; he climbs the Whinnie-hill ilka Sunday afternoon, be't summer or winter, and sits among the gowans ae time, and stands in the snaw anither, looking towards the Elfin-glen. I ance had the curiosity to steal to the hill-top to see what I could see. I saw you first, Morison; there ye were, on the pinnacle of the rock whilk overlooks the Elfin-cavern, for ye aye liked to be on the tap o' a' things; and there was yere mother among the honeysuckles of the entrance, motioning you down from the dizzy height. I soon found what James Rabson was looking for." A truth, never present to Morison's mind before, was stamped on it now; in a moment's space he had collected a score of circumstances, and connected them all with the affection for his mother which the words of Mattie Anderson had intimated.

"I feel and see," said Mattie, "that ye are of the same opinion with the whole country-side; and that accounts for his uncommon wark about you, Morison, and his resolution to make you laird of Howeboddom."

"Make me laird of Howeboddom!" exclaimed Morison, with great and undissembled astonishment; "Mattie—Mattie, I entreat you not to make my feelings your sport in this manner—you are a strange girl; but, if ye love me, let me hear no more of this."

"Hear no more of this an I love you! And wherefore no!"

"Because," said Morison, "such a thing has never even been dreamed of: ye warned me against dreaming, Mattie; take the counsel to yourself."

"I can read the dream in a moment," said the maiden.

"If I am dreaming, I am no deaf: did not James Rabson, afore a score of folk, last Hallowmass-eve, declare you heir of Howeboddom? I have reason gude for remembering it, for something was said by my mither or myself in your dispraise, when James crested up, and tauld us plainly that the laird of Howeboddom—and ye should be that—was a match and mair for the heiress of Fourmerkland ony year, from Beltane to Beltane; and so it is—and because it is—"

"And because it is," he exclaimed, "the bastard boy of Mary Morison, who was so lately scorned and mocked, is admitted to woo the young heiress of Fourmerkland! is that your meaning, Mattie?"

"Indeed, lad," said the maiden, with great composure, "ye maun consider that Morison Roldan, baseborn though

he be, has the bitterness of his descent bonnily sweetened, and made fit for ony lips to swallow, when he comes as the young laird of Howeboddum. What wad the world hae said o' me, think ye, if I had allowed myself to fa' in love with ane that had naught but twa goose feathers and a whittle, as the daft sang says! they wad have tossed their noses, and said, the heiress of Fourmerkland had made a bonnie hand of herself: wha wad have thought it!"

"I see it all, now," said Morison; "you have accounted well for the sudden sunshine of your own looks, and for the encouraging nods and winks of your father and your mother. Mattie, you have known me long, will you believe what I say?"

"I have known you," said Mattie, "since you were ten years old; all the lass-weans at the school kenned ye as weel as me; mony a time I have heard them cry, 'It's as true as if Morison Roldan himself said it.'"

"Well, then," said Morison, "as sure as that flash which now passed the window belongs to heaven, so sure will I not be laird of Howeboddum, even were it pressed upon me. I have not another word to say on the subject;—and now, I suppose, I may go home?"

The heiress seemed to shrink in Morison's arms—it was a minute or two before she spoke. "It's no," said she, "that I object to your independent feeling: independence is a bonnie word; but what I dislike is the folly of casting yere fortune away; that is the queerest, oddest, daftest thing I ever heard of ye; and ye ken yere ways are not those of wisdom. If a casket of minted gowd were to drap at yere foot frae the moon, Mr. Independence would give it a kick, and cry on Consideration to come and pick it up!" She withdrew half an armful of her hair from his shoulders, and began to twine and twist it around her fingers, coiling it up, and then letting it loose again; she wist not well what to say or do.

Morison came to her aid. "That the laird of Howeboddum," he said, "and his sister Jeanie should be so unkind to their own kindred as to give their possessions to a stranger, I can believe, for their hearts run before their heads, and they have long loved me with a rising affection; but because they are weak, am I to be wicked? There are families in the vale who inherit their blood; to such should their lands be left, and not to one who will as surely refuse them as he now withdraws his arm from the waist of Mattie Anderson."

What answer Mattie would have made to this may be guessed. The door burst open, and her mother entered the room, exclaiming, "Have I held out my hand to a dreamer and a fool? If ye winna allow yersel to be the heir of Howeboddum, what has brought ye to the honest, spon- sible

house of Fourmerkland!—Swith awa wi'!—take the road—the rain will cool ye; a lad whose head's sae het as to scorn his fortune, stands in need of the interposition of heaven in the shape of rain; make yersel scarce, I say—Mary Morison's bastard boy shall never be allowed to darken our doors again."

"O, mither!" said Mattie, "who could have thought that so bright a beginning would have had sae black a hinder-end! I aye said there was something wrang about him, but wha wad hae jaloused he would hae gane sae far wrang as this! and this is no the warst on't; I doubt I have offended young laird Skimming of the Bogrie; he was to have come and seen me on his new blood-horse, with silver bits in the bridle, nae less, and, instead of him, wha should slip in but Morison there!"

"Ay, that's warst of a', Mattie; but ye did for the best, ye did for the best," said Pennie.

Morison looked on Mattie, then on her mother: he could scarce forbear laughing outright at the ludicrous distress visible in both their faces. "And what's more," he said, following up the train of lamentation, "I doubt that the young laird has suffered what he will like worse than a wetting or a disappointment in love: he will for a while curse my hands and the scroggie thorns of the Fourmerkland; only tell him not to say any thing uncivil of me, lest, when we fogather next, we shouldna part sae easy."

"Away wi' ye! I say," exclaimed the mother.

"The door stands open," said the daughter.

"And I tell ye, young man," said the father, roused, and joining them, "sic a shame has na been offered to my house since the tapmost stane was laid. I have heard it a'—ye're a born fool! a born fool!—To come on the wrang side of the blanket's naught; but to kick away fortune like a blin-man's ba', and, having done sae, to presume to talk of love to my wean, my dutifu' wean—my example of a wean. But the door stands open—that was weel said, Mattie Anderson—ye ken the way hame—make yersel scarce."

"There ye stand, three of ye, whom the world cannot match for selfishness," said Morison: "there ye stand, Pounds, Shillings, and Pence; personifications of the rule of three and barter. Ye cannot conceive how low and how mean I think you; with what pity I look down upon you;—but farewell—Morison, the bastard boy, will live to show you that he was honouring you by this visit." He took a step or two towards the door, then looking back, said with a smile—"I have not refused to be laird of Howeboddom yet, Mattie—James Rabson has a prevailing way with him;—and Jeanie, my ain Jeanie, is also persuasive; I have nae wish to break their hearts, and say nay to six hundred a year gude!"

He vanished as he said this, and Pennie Hudlestane exclaimed, "That's a queer lad, and I doubt he's a deep ane—we have been owre hasty, it's like!"

CHAPTER X.

"Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labour plies."

BURNS.

THE storm had ceased, the lightnings were withdrawn, and the streams, suddenly aroused and as suddenly appeased, had subsided and offered no obstruction to Morison as he hastened from the Fourmerkland to the Elfin-glen. As he recalled the events of the night, he could not help remarking the obstacles which chance had thrown in the way of his late journey, nor do we mean to say that he was free from a superstitious feeling as he mused on them. But what touched him most was the scorn heaped on him by father, mother, and daughter. The baseness of his birth was a serpent by which, he began now to perceive more strongly, he should in future be stung; nor did he see any escape from a reproach which, though expressed only by the vulgar, influenced the learned and the high-minded. A thousand times, as he revolved all reasonable schemes of ambition, did he wish he had belonged to those stirring times when brave deeds wiped out all stain of birth, and when it was thought no dishonour to be called bastard. He was now growing strong and active; he was without fear; his presence of mind was fit for every emergency; and he felt that indescribable swelling of soul which is only known to minds created for great achievements of mind or body. He lay down, scarcely fatigued for all he had undergone, and fell asleep and dreamed of battle-fields, victory spreading her wings over him, and of honours earned by bravery and by genius.

He lay far into the morning, and when he awoke he found the sunlight on his face and his mother's voice in his ear. "Morison, for shame! the blessed sun himself reproaches ye—sluggard! will ye lie all day? Have ye forgotten that a voice has gone through the vale, signifying that a great preacher—a holy one—has come into the land, and that to-day, at noon, he will speak to the people on the wrath to come? I put small faith in freets; but who will tell me that the thunder, and the fire, and the rain were yestreen for naught! and hasna that douce, but something cracked man, Sandie Peden, as gude as prophesied that the

French, wi' their swords and spears, will stand afore lang as thick in Galloway as stubble in a new-shorn field!—Up, therefore, my man, and see that ye bring away something mair nor the text."

Morison now remembered that a sermon upon "The coming Wo"—such were the words—had been promised, and rose, wondering what sort of sermon it might be.

On his way to the entrance of the Elfin-glen, he perceived at a distance, close by an old fortalice that commanded the path, a crowd of people collected and more gathering. The first person that greeted him was Nickie Neevison. "Ye're a fine lad! I have a crow to pouk wi' you; you a scholar and a student to be, and fit to hae yere mouth opened, to allow a wandering parson to come to yere door-stane and take the word of God out of your mouth, and the bread frae atween yere teeth."

The greeting of John Milligan was of another sort. "Ye are well come, Morison Roldan; this day ye will see the corn-fan applied to the chaff; this day will ye hear the thunder, and see the live lightnings of the Word. Ye have sometimes thought that my Saturday's prayers on the skaling of the school had unction in them—he with the true unction is here at last. O Morison, terrible times, terrible times are coming, of which my friend sees the shadow! But here he comes—ye will hear more anon."

The person thus announced was the preacher, to hear whose sermon on "The coming Wo" the people were assembled. He was a tall man, with a fine—nay, a noble, but wild character of face; his hair was long and matted; he wore a long dark cloak, carried his hat and his Bible in his hand, and bowed right and left, saying, "Bless ye, bless ye," as he took his station on a fragment of the tower round which his hearers were crowding. While Morison was endeavouring to recollect his face, the preacher held out his hands east and west, and north and south, and exclaimed: "All ye that are worldly, and selfish, and griping—with souls fit for a gimlet-bore—who are hard of heart, seared of conscience, and who love not Scotland as the fragrant breast of your mother—begone! depart!—ye are of the nether millstone breed, and I may as well stick my staff in the ground and water it, with the hope of its producing garlands, as preach of 'The coming Wo' to you."

"Preserve me!" said Nickie Neevison, "what a Saint John in the wilderness sort of look!—his sermon will be a thistly ane."

When the audience became composed, the preacher intimated his text in the words of Ezekiel. "Now, as I beheld the living creatures, behold, one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a

beryl; and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels." He read these words twice with an audible voice, and then exclaimed, "Who can explain this dread vision? Who can expound the terrible mystery of the wheel within a wheel, endowed with eyes and with living life? Can you, shepherds of the hills, who tend flocks and eat food with a tarred finger? Can you, husbandmen of the vale, who sow and reap, and are given to slumbering in the kirk? Can you, children of the sea, who dwell on troubled waters, and are neither in heaven nor in earth, but in a continual state of fear and tribulation? You are all dumb: and why are you dumb?—yea, because you are blind. And why are you blind? because ye love the delights of life, and would not quit the fleshpots of Egypt for a day, to be indulged with a view of paradise, with angels laying their white bosoms over their harps."

"I wish he would come to the 'Wo of the Wheels,' " said Adam Wilson the miller; "I jalouse he wants a cog, and that his gudgeons are wrang."

"Now," continued the preacher, "I see you stretch out the neck, and look east and west, and north and south, to see from whence 'the coming wo' can come. But the coming wo is unlike other woes. The spear has come against you, and so has the ball; you have had the fires of the Romish church kindled around you; yea, the Lutheran church put your thumbs in screws of steel, and wrenched your joints asunder; the winds of heaven waisted the fleets of your enemies against you; sore famine came upon you, and civil war was here with all its horrors. Yet all these were but passing evils—the coming wo is a permanent one, and will waste you more than the famine, destroy you more than the sword, pinch you worse than the steel boot and thumb-screw, and be more terrible than the fires of the Romish church."

"It maun be the moor-ill amang our ewes," muttered a shepherd; "I have aye dreaded something would happen since they crossed the Cheviot with the Spanish."

"I have nae doubt," whispered a gardener, "that 'the coming wo' is a new kind of locust of the caterpillar breed—there winna be a green leaf left in the land."

"I'll go to sea in an old wife's shoe," said a sailor, "if he don't mean the white worm and the dry rot in timber,—farewell to the wet sheet, the full sea, and the piping wind."

"Since we cannot see 'the coming wo,'" continued the preacher, "through the dull dim eyes of the people of this

land, let us look at it by the pure light of scripture. The vision which appeared unto the prophet was of a wheel within a wheel, and every one had four faces; the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. Now what followed this dread vision! There followed wo, wo to Israel—the sword was upon them, and the chariot and the hand of the armed man, and nothing but a remnant of the people was spared. All this is typical—it is a scriptural shadowing forth of things to happen in these our latter days. The wheel within a wheel, my people, is that wondrous invention called machinery; wood, and iron, and brass, are performing the work of flesh and blood; and we behold linen woven, broadcloth made, and cotton manufactured, with a rapidity which men call magical, but I call demoniacal. Look upon that marvellous engine, my people: is there not wheel within wheel! does it not seem moved as with a living spirit! yea, doth not that hot and devilish power, called steam, keep it in perpetual motion, and enable it to perform its prodigies? I say, then, my friends, that the vision of the wheel within a wheel, seen by the river of Chebar, was plainly typical of machinery moved by steam."

"Na, but the like of that now," said a peasant; "this is the man for wringing a clear meaning out of a dubious text."

"There's the true root of the matter in him," said Johnnie Spulepin, the weaver; "I have na had half the work frae Paisley since 'the coming wo' of machinery came."

"I'm dubious that he is na rightly grounded in scripture," muttered a man from a neighbouring borough; "cotton's dirt cheap, and linen may be had for an auld sang since spinning-jennies were invented and machinery came in."

"Now, my people, the four faces are typical of the character of 'the coming wo' to man. The first face was the face of a cherub. Mark that! Invention has come with smiles and sweetness, and with an aspect of heaven, to persuade us to adopt it—to put the helve to the hatchet that is to cut down the whole forest. The second face was the face of a man. Mark that also. This was to persuade us that the wheel within a wheel—'the coming wo,' was for the use and advantage of man: that it would lighten his toil; enable him to wipe his brow, and rest him; and that it was a most humane thing, and would make man as a god on earth. The third face—and now comes the wo!—the third face was the face of a lion. What—the gentle cherub, and man, the noble and the good, are becoming a ravening lion, whose teeth and claws rend and devour! This intimates that to all but him to whom the machine belongs, it will be as a ravening lion; devouring their substance, and drinking their blood. And the fourth was the face of an

eagle. O, my brethren, this comes home ! This is so plain that a child may understand it. It is typical of two things : first, that machinery will, as with an eagle's wing, fly to the uttermost ends of the earth ; and secondly, that, as with an eagle's beak and claw, it will seize and rend all lower things : and thus will machinery—"the coming wo"—be king of the earth."

"His presence be about us !" said a farmer. "If machinery will plough and sow, and send spring and summer—O for a new nineteen years' lease of Knockhoolie !"

"Now, my people," said the preacher, "first we instance, then apply. Mine are no vain or visionary fears. In the first place, the prophet hath told us, that what followed were lamentations, and weeping, and mourning ; and, in the second place, I will interpret and explain the 'coming wo,' and show you the evils which will result from an invention more destructive to man than that of gunpowder. Certain men have seized on the whole earth as their inheritance, and certain men have possessed themselves of all the gold and silver thereof. To the former belongs agriculture ; to the latter, machinery. Now, the former are compelled to employ men to plough, and sow, and reap ; nor can they have more than one crop in the year, for such is the will of God. The latter have got machines made with such skill and cunning, that they can card, and spin, and weave, and bleach, with little help from man ; they put on the steam, and set the wheel within a wheel agoing, and coin gold and silver as in a mint. Behold, therefore, my people, the wo and the desolation about to come upon you. All ye who live by skill, and are cunning in the arts of spinning and weaving, and in the manufacture of tools of brass and iron, put on sackcloth and strew ashes on your heads. The time will come when a fourth of the people of this land will want bread because of 'the coming wo'—for machinery works but for the rich. Therefore I say that he who invented spinning and weaving machines should be stoned ; and he who invented steam-engines should be hanged by the neck till he be dead, nor should the Lord show mercy to his soul !"

"May the devil burn yours, you canting rascal !" exclaimed a man, indignantly, making his way through the crowd up to the preacher ; "may the devil burn yours, you canting rascal ! Will you attempt to preach down innocent useful machinery, when there are so many sins and enormities in the land to turn your sermons against ! You have taken up the vulgar hue and cry against a humane and benevolent invention ; your narrow soul will not permit you to comprehend the breadth and splendour of what you exclaim against ; you shut your eyes to the millions—yea, millions which the invention will thrust into the pockets of the gov-

ernment, and thereby enable them to wage wars and conquer countries, and so extend the reign of knowledge, science, and philosophy over the habitable globe."

"Thou art but a rude person," said the preacher, "to thrust thyself into this matter; thou and I can never agree. Thou art one who estimates human happiness by the money which goes into the government's pocket: I estimate it by the condition, the social condition of the people; by the numbers of well-fed, well-clad, and well-instructed men, and women, and children. I tell thee this machinery, which thou callest humane, is an aristocrat and a tyrant; it throws, and will throw, thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands, out of employment; but because there are more yards of calico made, and more money put into the pocket, thou wilt not inquire what hands made them, nor into how many pockets the money went. I tell thee that, if the men of this generation saw with my eyes, and felt the wheel within a wheel, as I do, they would arise in one indignant mass, and crush your machinery with stones, and consume your mills with fire. I have said my say:—in another district shall I explain to man 'the coming wo,' and lift up my voice, as I have done here, for the benefit of benighted mankind. Farewell."

"Not so fast, not quite so fast, my friend," said the person who had interrupted him—a stout, bandy, bow-legged man, with a face strewn with small pearls on a purple ground, and an eye whose fire still prevailed against the surrounding fat in which it was set, like a small wick burning in a cupful of grease. "Not so fast, my friend," said Hugh Heddles, Esquire, a stranger who had purchased a small farm, through which the Elfin-burn ran after freeing itself from Mary Morison's glen, and on the side of which the old tower rose, among the ruins of which the preacher had delivered the sermon on the coming wo. "Not so fast; you have uttered punishable words, and I accuse you of stirring up the people to crush my machinery, and burn my mill with fire;" so saying, he stretched out his hand to seize him.

"Lo! man," said he, "where is thy machinery, and where is thy mill? they are but in thy imagination; there is not a mill in all this land save that of Adam Wilson, which grindeth oats and barley—I preached against 'the coming wo.'"

A loud laugh from all the people around disconcerted Hugh Heddles, Esquire, and one of the hearers—it was James Rabson of Howeboddum, said, "The man against whom your hand is lifted is one distraught—a scholar, whom too much learning hath made mad—therefore harm him not—I will answer for his appearance in any court in the land."

"He may be mad," said Hugh Heddles, "but he speaks damned coherently and sarcastically; but, as I have not built my mill, it cannot be in danger of fire—so let him go."

"Let him go!" exclaimed Nickie Neevison, with great contempt; "d'ye think ye could hae hadden him! My certie, man, he would have been as the lion, and I as the eagle in the vision, upon ye; he wad have taen his teeth and I my claws; we never allow preachers of God's word to be haurled away like malefactors. But I'm saying yere no gaun to make a kirk and a mill on this bonnie burnside, to set up yere wheel within a wheel in! My conscience! the bonnie stream itself would na consent to sic profanation."

"I shall make the experiment, however, and that soon," said the new proprietor, and away he walked. The meeting, late so stormy, became quiet, and the people sought their homes, discussing, as they went, the merits of the sermon on "The coming Wo."

When Morison returned to the Elfin-cottage he was accompanied by Jeanie Rabson—the laird had looked wistfully up the glen, but shook his head and went home. "Weel, my bairn," said Mary, "ye see what a servant of the Most High can do; he moved some of the stocks and stones of this valley that never moved before. O, my man, his ministry is the highest of all ministry. But sit down, Jeanie Rabson, and tell me what the sermon was about, and where the text lay."

When this was explained, she held up her hands and said, "Ah, a grand subject! a wheel within a wheel! I remember ance douce Mr. Macknight, whom scoffers ca' Sleepy Samuel, tried his hand on it in Glengarnock kirk, and we lost him amang the machinery."

"O but," said Morison, with a smile, "our preacher to-day neither lost himself among the wheels nor encouraged sleep. Except that the text had no connexion whatever with the present inventions in machinery, he was singularly clear, vigorous, and pointed. Yet the man was mad."

"O, Morison, my bairn," said Mary, "ye are but a babe yet in the matter of gospel symbols; the less visible the connexion, the more beautiful and to be admired is the application. O, my bairn, read that glorious work, M'Ewen on 'The Types,' and see how that precious youth draws the sweet milk of Christian consolation from the yell and barren things of antiquity."

"I have," replied Morison, "and I consider him as much too ingenious; but yet the preacher to-day, mad or wise, has opened my eyes on a wide field of speculation—the better text would have been, 'Man hath found out many inventions.'"

The voice of one singing, or rather chanting, was now heard. Jeanie Rabson exclaimed, "Here's Nickie Neevison

coming in ane o' her grand firrivities—and wha's this wi' her? It's Dominie Milligan; let me take a peep in the glass, for my head's a fright—and wha's this wi' him again? Ou, it's the new laird—him they ca' esquire—pest on his name, I'll forget my ain soon—ou, Hugh Heddles, him that bought Largnane stream and tower at the grand roup at Edinburgh, and called it Heddle Hall."

In came the three, Nickie Neevison foremost, with many a beck and bingie. "Now, Mary, woman," she said, "and you, Jeanie Rabson, ye kenna wha I have brought to see you? this is John Milligan, after whom the bairns cry dominie, and whase look whan he gangs to bed and rises in the morning is directed to that pleasant place called Howeboddom. And this is Hughie Heddles, the second son of auld Heddles, the sacken-weaver of Duncow, whom folk called Thrums; and he calls himself malefacturer—a braw name. But he has been baptized this morning in the Elfin-burn by the name of 'The coming Wo,' and so The coming Wo shall be his name now and for evermore."

The dominie sundry times held up his hand, saying, "Peace, woman, peace!" but the stream of Nickie's converse was as obstinate as a moorland burn in a thunder-plump; at last he took advantage of a pause in her harangue and said, "Mary, whose name is Morison, this gentleman, whose baptismal name is Hugh, his surname Heddles—not malefacturer, as Nickie erringly, and, I suspect, sneeringly says—is come to make a proposal which will, peradventure, be for your worldly advantage: he will explain his meaning unto you."

"Yes, madam," said Hugh Heddles, Esq., of Heddle Hall; "I am come, as this good man justly says, to propose something which will be much for your worldly advantage. I am Heddles, of the great firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, now proprietor of that portion of the soil called Largnane, through which runs a stream of great value and capability."

"I can answer for its value," said Nickie; "it's just half alive wi' bonnie burn trouts; and as for its capability, did ye ever see it when the windows of heaven were opened? Capable! my certie! it's capable of ony thing; if ye dinna build Heddle Hall as steeve as a tower, the burn will make a kirk and a mill on't!"

"Madam," continued Heddles, "I shall make this country into a perfect mint; spade guineas will be as plentiful as gowans in May; the weans will, instead of rowanberry beads, wear oriental pearls; your gowns shall be of silk; and for carts, ye shall all have chariots; for porridge, plum-pudding; and beef shall abound more than potatoes. Wom an, now a domestic slave, instead of spinning, and knitting, and planting potatoes, and drudging even and morn, will sit

on her carpets, and have spiced meats, and perfumed airs, and musical instruments to play of their own accord. And yet all this cannot be achieved without I have the permission which I come to request."

"God guide us! Mary, woman, grant it," said Jeanie Rabson; "it will make this little vale a paradise, and we who dwell in it will be little lower than the angels."

"O grant it, Mary," said Nickie Neevison; "it will do us a' gude; I wad like to sit among artificial hilies, and hae the floor laid with crown-pieces on edge—but help us, too, an' we are all ladies, where will we get servants frae?"

"Your servants will be machinery," said Morison; "a woman of timber and iron will spin your seventeen hundred linen; a machine will help you on with your mantle; a dish, of its own accord, will offer broth; ye will be fed by a steam-engine; and, instead of yoking horses to ride to market, turn but a cock, and you distance the eagle."

"This youth," said Heddles, "has a very pretty notion of the thing. Know, then, that on the western bank of this stream the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, will erect spinning and weaving mills, moved by that useful servant, water; and, where water fails, by that powerful auxiliary, fire. Man and woman will be required to do naught but sit, look, and admire the fertile genius which created a power fit to work more than Michael Scott and all his devils, and drudge and sweat to more purpose than ten thousand brownies."

"There's the wheel within a wheel which poor deranged Willie of Starryheugh expounded," said Nickie Neevison. "He saw naught but evil in the invention; he had not the sense to observe that this son of Anak, called a machine, would work for us poor bodies. He thought, Heaven restore him! that it would toil only for the rich; but what could ye expect of a man avowedly daft? But gang on, sir: this story is delightful and wonderful."

"It will work for all in a philosophical sense," said Heddles. "Now, madam, you must aid in this good work—you must really become a benefactress to your country. I shall explain myself."

"Mary," whispered Nickie, "he wants ye to be lady of Heddle Hall—but, bless me! wherefore so white? I meant nae offence; besides, many a one would loup at him, wid-difu' bodie though he be."

Heddles coughed and continued: "This glen seems made on purpose: the stream is never dry, and the sides and bottom are of rock; so it is quite a natural trough or reservoir. Now, my good madam, we wish for your permission to put a dam across the mouth of the glen, just a stone throw above the house, so that we may have a command of the descent; we have had it surveyed and valued, and I am au-

thorized to offer you seven pounds twelve shillings and ninepence halfpenny per annum—quite a little fortune to one in your condition; and, as I knew you would not refuse it, I had the lease drawn out, and here it is, ready for you to sign.”

“Take it, Mary,” said Nickie Neevison; “what sairs sic a wilderness of a place! Take it, woman; the dam will drown the howlets, and drive out the hawks, and hinder the hawthorns frae sprouting; and, aboon a’, choke up the Elfin-cavern, whilk was but a rendezvous for gangrel bodies and wicked elves; ye maun let me get a plant of the lang sooping honeysuckle with the golden horns, that hings its garlands at the entrance; there’s na sic a flower in a’ Glengarnock.”

“Take it, Mary,” said Jeanie Rabson; “the siller will do ye mair good than a’ the howlets that ever flew, the honeysuckles that ever grew—than a’ the flowers that ever sprang, or a’ the birds that ever sang.”

“And take it,” said the dominie, “were it but to shut out the elfs and imps of darkness from a howf in the land; for of a surety the Elfin-cavern—”

“I’ll see all the mills that ever were built on fire, and all the machinery that was ever made burnt, before the Elfin-glen shall be made into a mill-dam!” exclaimed Morison.

“Many an hour have I pulled wild flowers in the linn, and many an hour have I sat on my mother’s knee, while she was weeping in the Elfin-cave—I’ll—”

“O dinna use anither rash word, my son,” said his mother, with a brightening face; “the old glen is endeared to us baith by mony recollections. It mayna be.”

“Ye kenna what ye are refusing, Mary,” said Nickie Neevison. “Did ye no hear that Hugh Heddles’s braw machines will work for our gude—that they are to toil to put money into our pockets?”

“In a philosophic sense, and according to the principles of national economy,” said Hugh. “The money will not, indeed, come into your pockets at the first; but, in obedience to the true principles of commerce, it will come to you, even as the corn has to be committed to the ground before it can spring up in the ear and come to the sack.”

“Hout, tout,” said Nickie Neevison, “that will never do. Wad it no be wiser, think ye, to let it come into the pouches of the poor first? It could then, in a philosophic sense, and in obedience to the true principles of commerce, take its own time in finding out the pockets of the rich. Unless my amendment is approved, I not only say the back of my hand be to your machinery, but I’ll show you that, unless it be for the good—not the philosophic good, but the real fill-belly and cleed-back advantage of the land, the thing

shall only happen when the maiden can loup owre the moon."

"There's nae use for a' this claver," said Jeanie Rabson; "we winna part wi' the glen, and that's enough. And, now that I think on't, my brother James wad rather gie twicè the money than see the bonnie trout louns and the Fairy-cave filled up wi' water to move wabster's shuttles."

"Weel, weel," said Nickie, "I have said my say—I've only add that, in the first place, ye may as weel bridle a whirlwind as dam in the Elfin-burn; it will call on all its moorland-streams, and seek aid from the clouds, and down it will come on your braw embankment like a spate on a snaw-wreath; and, secondly, it's said in the auld prophecy that naught that's made of stane and lime shall stand on the bank of the Elfin-burn except for the glory of God and the honour of the house of Roldan. Ye may build a kirk, Hugh Heddles, and the Roldans may build a castle; but nae meaner thing can stand—I mind the words weel."

Hugh Heddles rose in something like wrath. "I am head of the firm," said he, "of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, and I am neither to be preached nor prophesied out of my resolution: the mills shall be built, the machinery revolve, and the land be enriched, in spite of madmen's sermons and madwomen's says."

Loud laughed Nickie as Heddles withdrèw. "It will gang hard wi' me an I havena some fun wi' this widdifu' knurle of a bodie, before he rears his mills and hings his machinery. If I could but persuade the burn to get up sic a spate as it did when Morison there was born, I could manage the rest."

The snows of winter fell and then melted, and the winds of spring blew, and, with the sun, brought the bud to the tree, and the gowan to the brae, yet nothing was heard of Hugh Heddles and his undertaking. But on the first morning of May, fifty men, with spades and pickaxes, arrived on the banks of the Elfin-burn; one portion began to make the channel straight, the other to pull down the old tower, for the purpose of raising mills in its place, while over the whole presided Hugh Heddles, with a junior member of the firm, who carried a roll of plans, which he loved to unfold whenever a doubt required solving. At first the peasantry looked with curiosity on the plans and on the change about to be effected on the stream, which was a favourite, and on an old tower around which was hung the garland of many a tradition. One or two rather spoke words of encouragement.

"It's weel may wared! the burn's a downright deevil of a burn; it drowned Wattie Kennedy, of the Hietea, the only honest tinkler I ever kenned, and it swooped away twa ricks of as gude corn frae my cousin as ever were wat wi' water; bank it in and keep it in, say I."

"Aweel," said another, "that's a gude turn to the country to pull down that auld dungeon of a tower, a howf for bats and vermin; but, lads, when ye come to the vaults, take care, ye'll start a spirit; the story runs that a man was murdered by aye of the rough auld Roldans. I canna say I ever saw aught myself, but mickle has been heard."

"We shall keep a watch to-night," said Heddles to his partner; "those who know not the value of our undertaking in a philosophic point of view, may come and destroy the tools, and pull up the marks which we have made."

The men renewed their labours in the morning; nothing had been molested during the night, nor on the second evening did aught appear to alarm them. The watch was placed again on the third evening, and midnight was all but come, without any other sound than the gurgling of the stream, nor any other sight save a couple of owls, that sailed round the vacant space where their tower of refuge lately stood, with many a melancholy hoo-hoo. Hugh Heddles himself had come from a distance to see that his two watchers did their duty; the moon was dipping now and then into the clouds, and throwing darksome shadows over the stream and the ruins; the waterfall in the Elfin-linn was heard through all the air; and now and then a rushing wind shook the trees and raised up the dust of the cast-down tower.

"See that no one molests these marks or obliterates these lines," said Hugh. "The peasants are a malicious race, and I heard something like threats held out that elves, and such imaginary personages, would assert their right to their immemorial haunts, and do us an ill turn. I have lived in the world these fifty and odd years, and in all that time nothing has appeared to me worse than myself."

"Flint, fire, hell, and Hades!" exclaimed a voice, hollow and fierce; "who has destroyed my bedchamber?"

All the three turned round to see what this might be, when they beheld a grim figure, half naked, with matted locks, kindling eyes, and a huge pikestaff in its hand, seated on a portion of the tower, and not at all shunning observation, but courting notice; for, before they could exchange look or word with each other, he exclaimed again, in a fiercer mood than before, "Flint, fire, hell, and Hades! who has destroyed my bedchamber?"

"It's the spirit of the murdered man!" said one of the watchers. "This comes of meddling with haunted towers!" and off he bolted through the Elfin-burn, making the stream rise like a rainbow as he dashed across and made for the nearest house.

"It's the deevil himself!" muttered the other watcher. "I ken him by his burning eyes and the charking of his teeth." And he followed his comrade with equal speed, but not with the like luck, for he ran towards a light on the other

side of a deep morass, plunged out of one peat-hole into another, and at every plunge uttered a yell, for no doubt he believed that the evil spirit was following.

Hugh Heddles was left alone; and it shall be said of him that for a time he faced the enemy resolutely; but his courage was beginning to give way, when the figure, uttering for the third time the cry of "Flint, fire, hell, and Hades! who has destroyed my bedchamber?" sprang forward, and bestowed upon the unfortunate manufacturer such a blow with his pikestaff as laid him senseless on the ground.

Hugh lay for some time before he recovered; and when he did gather back his senses, he beheld the apparition standing grimly over him, with his pikestaff in the air; he therefore lay motionless, and it is likely he would have continued in that painful posture till the morning, had not a single horseman, with pistols at his belt and a sword glittering at his side, ridden up. The stranger reined in his horse, and exclaimed, "Hell and devil! who has dared to throw down the tower of my fathers?"

"I am gone now," thought Hugh to himself; "these spirits are both in a tale."

"Flint, fire, hell, and Hades!" cried he of the pikestaff, "who has destroyed my bedchamber?"

"Hold!—madman, fool!" cried Lord Roldan—for it was he himself, on his way home from Italy—"hold! else, by Heaven, I'll run you through." He sprang from his horse as he spoke, and holding his sword between the prostrate manufacturer and his foe, said "hold" to the one, and "rise" to the other.

Hugh, who imagined himself fairly in the hands of two evil spirits, who might quarrel about his carcass if he continued silent, but if he spoke would divide him, held his tongue; while the madman exclaimed, "Why do you guard him, my lord? Let me slay him in my wrath!" These were words of comfort. Hugh arose with not a few groans, but would not rise wholly.

"Who are you, sir?" said Lord Roldan, mildly; "and has this madman hurt you much?"

"Not much," replied Hugh; but, before he said more, he looked at Lord Roldan's feet, and more anxiously at John's, and did not at all seem satisfied; he however said, in broken sentences, "I am Hugh Heddles, Esq., of the great firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, and this is my ground; and I have cast down the old bucklement of a tower, that I may build a mill for spinning and weaving, so that the people, in a philosophical sense, may be enriched."

"God particularly confound the whole firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, and cast them and all their cursed reels and wheels into the lake of darkness!" exclaimed Lord Roldan, and then rode on.

Next morning the legend of the three watchers flew over the land with a dozen variations, and the whole country-side was convulsed with laughter. "There has nae been sic an event in the land," said Nickie Neevison, "since the day that Boston laid the Spedlans ghost. Od! I wad hae liked to have seen daft John Tamson, who sometimes slept in the auld tower, put daft about his bedchamber; and Lord Roldan, dafter still about demolishing the bigging—what rare fun!"

CHAPTER XI.

"Her yellow hair, beyond compare,
Comes trinkling down her swan white neck,
And her two eyes, like stars in skies,
Wou'd save a sinking ship frae wreck."

BURNS.

On the morrow the men of the firm of Heddles resumed their labours, but they resumed them with fears and tremours felt more than expressed: sundry of them, indeed, were natives of the south, and bowed their heads to other superstitions; but most of them were Scottish hinds, and all, to a man, nourished some spiritual or undefined dread of the other world, and had no desire to face any of its airy shapes before that grinning antic, Death, should regularly enrol them in his skeleton regiment. They wrought in groups; they talked of what had appeared last night, and of what had been seen and heard before. One shook his head and said, "Gude winna come on't. There was Rab Steel, of Steelston—he wad dig up the fairy ring on the braes of Barjarg—what is he now!—a poor demented creature, wi' a powk and a staff!"

"Ye needna gang sae far, neighbour, as Barjarg," said a second—"ye a' mind Tam Gunnion, the smuggler—right or wrang; he wad take down the silver bell that hangs on the tapmost tower of Sweetheart Abbey. I was at the finding of his body; some say he missed a foot, and some say ane of the saunts clodded him down frae the summit, when his hand made the bell play ting—I winna say how that was—but this I ken, there was nae as much unbroken bane about him as would have made a baubee whistle."

"I mind freets and fears as little as onybody," said a third, lifting a shovel, and shouldering a pickaxe, "but I have got sic a pain in my back wi' stooping, that I'll e'en slip awa hame and nurse myself by the fireside for a day or twa." And he marched away accordingly. Others followed

the example; and when Hugh Heddles, with a plaster applied where the pikestaff fell, came forth, he found that dismay had dispersed most of his people.

Hugh remonstrated. "The great firm," said he, "of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, are not to be daunted by the ravings of a daft man, or the cursings of a wild lord. A lord! we will make a new race of lords;—so go on, straighten the stream, root out the old tower."

One demurred for reasons not strictly spiritual. "So this is aye of the towers of the auld house of Roldan; if I had thought that before, deil be in my fingers if I had moved a stane o't—auld blude's scarcer in this land than it was, and I dinna like a race of lords begot by machinery."

"New blude's as gude as auld blude ony time, as the crow said to the black pudding," exclaimed his companion; "but hear ye me: the Lord Roldan, wha we a' thought dieted on by worms, is come hame; and no that I care for him twa clinks of my pick, but when he sees the tower of his fathers rooted out, he'll shoot half a dozen of us, and then owre sea to the pope, get absolution, come back, and stick half a dozen more." In spite, however, of these grumblings, the work went on; the stream was walled in with stone on each side; the old tower was rooted out, and on its site the mills for spinning and weaving, of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, began to appear above the ground, nay, to lift their heads over the thickets of holly and birch, with which the land was both adorned and encumbered.

Morison beheld all these changes with something of the carelessness of a young, ardent mind, to which few traditional recollections cling, and which regards alterations that shake the heart of age as matters of no moment. He looked into the vista of futurity, and heeded less the scenes nigh at hand. The view was indeed darksome; like the pilgrim in the valley of dread, he saw fearful shapes, and was stunned with dread forebodings; yet he continued to gaze till the landscape brightened, and the shapes grew like that of the loathly lady, shapes of beauty, and the forebodings gave way to hope. He had already turned his thoughts to a foreign land: his mother's views respecting him he regarded as visionary; as little did he like the idea of sitting down, as he saw James Rabson desired to place him—laird of Howeboddum; and if a thought connected with his native vale crossed his mind, it was one so wild and so hopeless that he never gave it utterance, but concealed it in his own bosom. It was this—he resolved, before he left the land, to seek an interview with Lord Roldan, and either induce him to do justice to his mother and wed her, or to renounce him as his son for ever. The idea was a wild one, for his father was as wilful as he was fierce, and many preju-

dices, and some of them strong ones, required to be combated and overcome. Morison had, however, set his heart upon the attempt, and he nursed it in his bosom, and thought of it by day, and dreamed of it by night.

It must not be disguised that something which he regarded as supernatural urged him on to this. The intimation he had received, that, as one of the house of Roldan, his fate would be indicated by superhuman means, dwelt in his mind more strongly than he cared to acknowledge; and though he laughed at all tales either of witchcraft or goblinry, and was skilful in ridiculing them, his pride, his vanity, and his hope, together with a touch of the belief of the district, all united in inducing him to hold the tale true; and that a legend, worthy of mockery in others, would come to pass and be explained for him. These feelings and beliefs gave a seriousness to his brow when alone: he became fond of lonely and savage places; the secluded nooks of the woods, the turret of the falcon tower, the Elfin-cave, but more particularly the wild and caverned seashore, were to him as musing-places; and though he carried books with him, he looked at them less than he cast his eye on the boundless sea before him, and delighted to imagine his sail spread in some hitherto undiscovered shore, or, with pennon displayed and cannon flashing, treading the enemy's decks, sword in hand, and striking all down between stem and stern.

During his wanderings and his musings he had of late happened to meet casually with one who had the air of a stranger and of the sea. This was a middle-aged man, of a vigorous and active figure; dressed more like one of the land than of the wave; of pleasant address, and of very varied information. Morison had first met with him on the banks of the Elfin-burn, where he was looking at the rising structures of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, and was conversing with Heddles himself on the imports and exports of other lands, with an ease and a knowledge that showed he was intimate with such transactions. On meeting now with Morison among the caverned cliffs of Glengarnock, he addressed him with the ease of a person familiar with his name and history, nor did he seem disposed to conceal his own; he was, he said, Dick Corsbane, captain of the Wildfire, a vessel which he pointed out in the bay. "There she lies," he said, "at the back of that blackguard sandbank, Robin-rigg; as pretty a piece of workmanship as ever was hollowed out of oak; trades to all ports; can fight, too, on occasion; and carries forty as bold fellows as ever breasted the salt waves." He seemed to think he had said enough, and took a silver call from his pocket, and whistled; a little boat shot out of a neighbouring cove; and saying "Good morning," he stepped down the

cliff, and waved adieu as his boat went dancing over the dimpling water.

As Morison sauntered home he was accosted by Nanse Halberson. "This is maist the first day I have ventured out," she said, "for a sair illness fell on me all winter, and but for thy mother and thyself, Morison, and Jeanie Rabson, the auld witch-wife wad hae been put to sad shifts, and wi' a' her spells and charms might ablins have died for want. But it was better ordered, thanks to God and my other three friends; I am weel now; and see, lad, what worthy Dick Corsbane has gien me for a fair wind to the Wildfire—tea, and rum, and spicery—my gude word gangs for something wi' the world yet."

"But, Nanse," said Morison, "do you mean to tell me that such a well-informed man as Captain Corsbane believes that ye can sell him such a commodity as a fair wind?"

"In troth do I, Morison;—ye may set it down as scripture that all sailors, frae the admiral to the cabin-boy, are superstitious; and maybe, though the captain diana just believe sae meikle as others of his mariners, he believes quite enough for me when he pays me in sic coin as this for my good-will. But gude morning—when we next meet, and that will be soon—" here she whispered in his ear, "I shall tell ye something about Richard Corsbane that he wadna tell ye himself;" and away she went homewards, leaving Morison musing on her words.

There was something in the looks of Corsbane which Morison could as little love as define; but he resolved, when next he foregathered with him, to discourse more fully on all matters; and, as this sea-worthy seemed to seek his company, he felt that his wish would soon be gratified. It happened in the afternoon of the same day that Morison directed his steps as usual to the seaside, and ascending a cliff, on which formerly a small watch-tower stood, he observed the vessels in the bay were hung with streamers; on looking inland, he saw a flag displayed from the top of the castle of Roldan, and on the hills in the distance stood groups of people, all looking seaward. What this might mean he was not long left in conjecture, for his acquaintance, Corsbane, who seemed to haunt the rocks, was soon at his side, and informed him that it was in honour of Thomas Lord Roldan's return from foreign parts, for the vessel which bore him was expected in the bay during the coming tide.

"Lord Rokian himself returned some time since," continued the captain; "but though his mother loves him, he might make a crownpiece dinner of all his other friends in the district; he has his good points notwithstanding; whatever he promises, be it for good or evil, he never forgets."

"Then I see, sir," said Morison, "that you are but partly acquainted with Lord Roldan; that he remembers his word I have too good cause to question; whether he will deny his word remains to be seen. But no more of him now—how has it happened that Lord Thomas has grown into favour? he was wed to a heretic?"—"Why, blessed mother church separated him from his heretical spouse," replied Captain Corsbane. "His wife looked east when he looked west, and has sailed, so rumour says, for Ethiopia, or the Holy Land, on a pilgrimage. She has a little too much moonlight in the upper story—too light in the rigging—you understand me; and proposes to revive the days of simplicity at the foot of Mount Ararat! A pretty notion, but rather late for society just now; she will meet with kittle customers on Mount Carmel—but that's her look-out—she is devilish handsome, and knows what she is doing, and what other folk are doing too: she is acquainted with all the errors of Lord Roldan, ay, and is the keeper of some of his secrets, damme! I have seen him almost on his knees to her about some dirty bit of paper on which the word 'wife' was written. But what has Dick Corsbane to do with that? She kept it, and that was enough: she'll plague him with it, sink me if she don't! for she hates her husband's house, as a dutiful lady should."

"I have heard of this before—but enough of the name," said Morison. "I would rather hear you say something of your own achievements in the world. In that pretty craft, with good fellows on board, you will now and then, I presume, meet with an adventure worthy of being related on land."

Corsbane darted a keen look on the querist, and then replied—"Ay, we now and then meet with other matters than a snoring breeze and a good market; and I can tell you, younker, a pretty fellow, who takes in right good-will to the hollow oak, and remembers that money's a firm friend, however it is come by, soon becomes an earl—a sea-king, faith! and holds his court, damme! in the east or the west, with ladies of honour from all the winds of heaven, and of all the colours of the rainbow."

The captain paced to and fro while speaking, and seemed to imagine himself on the quarter-deck, with a foe in view; for his steps were short and quick, and his looks kindled.

"I have sometimes imagined," said Morison, "that a life of sea-adventure would suit me better than a life on land."

"Have you, younker? Then, damme, I honour you for it, and kiss your shoe-tie! You're a rarity in these latitudes! Here, lads of spunk, with fire in their eye, and quick of hand and head, sit still and vegetate, by the powers! and think they do enough by marrying some moorland laird's daughter with threescore of acres for a portion: and instead of doing noble deeds at sea, beget sons and daughters,

which any dunderhead can do. I have no patience with such sweet-milk cheese-parings—I haven't, on my soul!"

"Now I suppose," inquired Morison, "that a knowledge of navigation, some skill in steering, and a head and hand that can go anywhere and handle any thing, besides a certain intrepidity of soul, will be required of him who quits the back of a horse to become what the poets call 'a dark rider of the wave!'"

The captain answered, "All that, and mayhap somewhat more. These fingers of thine are long and round, and will do for a cutlass-hilt, if the fearless heart is there. But this is the chap that I love, damme! with a quick eye, an unperturbed spirit, and a ready finger; it makes a man's fortune in the free trade." And he displayed a very handsome pistol, which had seen service, for there was a cut of a sabre across the barrel. "Hast any knowledge of a trinket such as that, younker?"

"Do you see yon sea-hawk on the cliff?" said Morison. "It seems some twenty paces off." He snatched, as he spoke, a pistol from his own pocket, and firing, the hawk dropped dead into the water below.

Corsbane started, for the pistol flashed across his face: he sprang to his feet, seized Morison's hand, wrung it hard, and said, "Your fortune's made; you are just such a lad as we want. A man with a head as well as a hand is now and then required when I am absent from Miss Wildfire; you shall be shipped the first fair wind—it's a bargain, damme!"

Morison calmly reloaded the pistol, showing at the same time that it had a companion, and said, "We shall talk about that when we next meet: but here comes a fresh sail."

"You have an eye that's a match for that of the hawk which you shot, younker, if you see a ship between this and the coast of Ireland: but this will tell me." On applying his glass, Corsbane exclaimed, "Ay, you're right, and it's the right ship too; she comes with the tide, and what a press of sail she carries! A sudden squall now would capsize her as it would a paper kite." No sooner was the vessel of Lord Thomas descried, than it seemed as if hill and dale, and cliff and castle, had found the power of speech; shout after shout arose, shot after shot was fired, and so impatient grew many of the people, that they left the uplands and lined the landing-place in the bay, where they knew the vessel must, if rightly navigated, come to an anchorage. Though the breeze blew into the bay, and the tide was rapidly coming, the vessel had not a little space to clear, as well as difficulties of navigation to deal with, before she reached a safe haven. She had to turn the formidable sand-bar called Robin-rigg, which, stretching half across the bay, offered such resistance to the advancing swell, that the dash and break of the sea was heard by the spectators on the hills,

while at the same time they observed the threatening line of foaming and broken water where so many ships had gone to pieces.

The vessel that bore the people's hopes seemed to come full upon this dangerous bar; but, just when they least looked for it she turned the extreme point of Robin-rigg, and with her sails filled and a strong inland current, sailed fair up the middle of the bay; her decks were crowded with mariners, and there was waving of hats on board and of handkerchiefs on the hills. Lady Winifred caused her chair—her black chair of state—to be carried to the top of the castle, and there, with her two attendant maidens—the one more starched, and the other more rotund than when we last parted with them—sat looking on the bay, the banner of her house waving all the while above her. Lord Roldan stood behind her; not a word was uttered; but when the sand-bar on which so many ships suffered was passed, she drew her breath more freely. Horses ready saddled and bridled stood below; the servants filled the windows; nay, even the men who were at work for the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, fairly set at naught all remonstrance, and quitting shovel and pickaxe, hammer and trowel, flew to the neighbouring hills, notwithstanding the professional remark of their employer—"Go, and a murrain to you, since you will go; but your hands will soon make other powers for me over which curiosity can never come; powers that care for no sights, and, unlike mere mortals, will work night as well as day, nor desire meat and drink, nor covet sleep, nor dream of a holyday."

But there was one among the assembled people who seemed untouched with the general joy; this was Nanse Halberson; she looked north and she looked south, and she looked east and she looked west, and was heard to mutter to herself, "I dinna like the looks of the sky ava—there's some terrible thing in the air; it's no rain, weel I wot, for there's no a cloud to yield it—I wish there were; it's no fire, I think; for there's naught of that written on yon copper-coloured sky; come here and speak to me, my bairn." This she addressed to Davie Gelfock, who was mounted on a dead tree, and was gazing and shouting with the foremost. Davie descended at once—for though he disobeyed Dominie M'figan, and was thwart with every one save Morison, whom he loved and admired, he dared not to dispute the order of Nanse, who could turn him, he said, into a brown colt, and ride him post to doomsday, wi' as mickle ease as she could make a soleless shoe into a copper-bottomed barge.

"David," said she, with a stern brow, "dost thou know why I have chosen thee to be my messenger?"

"No," said Davie, not without an effort, and some trembling of the knees.

"Then I'll tell thee. If I bid ony of the pluckless sumpshs around me run to the castle and tell Lord Roldan, an he loves his brother to hasten to the bay with men and horses, and coils of rope, for he is in danger of perishing, they will stare at me, and mutter 'witch,' and promise to go, and yet abide—and so precious lives will be lost. But you are a lad of sense and spirit—and hark, in thine ear—neglect my bidding," and she held up her finger—"I shall make a world's wonder of thee next halloween."

Away started Davie, over knoll and through hollow, direct for the castle, but as he put ground between Nanse and himself, his fears began to subside. "She's baith a slee and an uncannie kimmer," said Davie, "and maun be obeyed; but as she canna see through Airnespie hill I needna burst myself." And as he said this he slackened his pace. "Besides," he continued, "I am no sure that I'm right in rinning—rinning! I'm no rinning, I'm ganging; weel then I'm no sure that I'm right doing a witch's errand, whether rinning or ganging, sae I'se stand still and consider it. Ye see, the case is this:—a witch says gang and bring horses and men and tows to help folk out of the sea, that are in nae danger o' drowning—weel then, I run her errand, and she raises a storm in consequence, and down comes help and plucks them out of the waves, and kimmer gets a' the glory on't—then it's clear that I raise the storm. Weel then, deil hae me if I gang the length of my foot; but stop, now—setting the case that she raises the storm depending on my sense and spirit—I quote her words, as Dominie Milligan says—and folk are drowned, then am I clearly to blame, and the loss of life will be laid at poor Davie's door. Sae I'll off like the wind—I'm owre lang here—but let me as I rin make an useful resolve—ay, when I say I'll do a thing, to do't—it will save me a world of trouble, and what is mair, thought—in which, for a' witch Nanse's opinion, I'm but indifferently gleg."

While Davie went on his errand the breeze died utterly away, the sun set on the distant hills, the crows seemed heaped on the pine tree tops, the cattle ran together in startled groups, and the sea birds sat and screamed; not one would go to its customary roosting-place. "I'm right," said Nanse Halberson; "God pity these poor wretches, how they wave their hands! Hark! I hear their shouts. Bird and beast ken something dreadful impends—man alone laughs; he will yell soon, if signs in heaven and on earth are to be believed."

The vessel came nearer the land, and approaching within gunshot of the promontory on which Morison and Corsbane stood, tacked gently, and veered away towards the landing-place, distant a short half mile. The sea lay calm as a sleeping babe, the little air that breathed pushed the vessel on her

way; the mariners, but more particularly the followers of Lord Thomas, cheered repeatedly; they crowded the deck, and seemed impatient of the brief-time which separated them from their friends. Lord Thomas himself stood on the prow; a young lady of exquisite beauty was beside him; he looked round once or twice to the sky, and said something to an old mariner, and waved his hand impatiently. "How beautifully she swims along!" said Morison; "and how many noble creatures that frail thing has the keeping of!"

"Ay," said Corsbane; "see, too, how many corded and iron-banded trunks she has sported on deck; I have seen the day when as bold a prize as that, ay, and as rich, has been snatched at the very entrance of her haven, like a dove struck by the hawk at the door of the dove-cote. I say, younker, when we sail eastward hoe! I'll show you a thing or two."

He would have said more, but a whirlwind stooped down all at once on the vale; it was limited in its career to a space not a hundred yards wide, and touching a tongue of land that shot far into the frith, and formed the bay, prostrated a grove of ancient pines like as much stubble, and descending on the sea, furrowed up the brine, and whirling it round, threw it half a mile high into the air. The rushing sound and the unexpected sight did not rob the mariners of their presence of mind; they were furling their sails and veering the ship when the devourer came up; it seized on the vessel, and whirling her round, dashed her into the agitated waves head foremost. One short-thrilling cry of terror and agony was heard; then all was hushed save the vehement tossing of the ocean, and nothing was seen save the fragments of the ship, scattered like foam on the wave, with here and there a drowning creature clinging to a spar or wreck—or more fatal still—to each other. The whole people stood for a moment as if struck into stone; they then rushed down to the bay; some with proper presence of mind mounted horses, others without an aim ran wildly along, shouting continually. Morison rushed into the waves in a moment, regardless of shout and call—he first encountered a long line of agitated water, and breasted through it like a sea fowl; he met and braved a second with like success; and in the third found the object for whom he had thus risked his life—a young lady; the same he had seen by the side of Lord Thomas. She was floating as fair and as senseless as a water lily; no sooner did Morison raise her from the wave, and shed the long dripping tresses from her brow, than he touched it with his lips, and bore her towards the shore; wave after wave following and overtaking him, as if enraged to be deprived of a prey so lovely.

With the whirlwind an almost total darkness came; and though the cloud was now and then lifted like a curtain from

the bay, it did more to distract than to aid those, and they were many, who were plunging on horseback, on foot, and in boats, to help the sufferers. A rush of horses was now heard, and the voice of Lord Roldan calling, "Is he saved—is Lord Thomas saved—where is my brother?" and spurring his horse as he spoke, he dashed fearlessly into the waves which churned to foam, and heaped in multitudes on each other, leaped east and west, casting a salt spray far up the cliffs. He came too late: the five minutes which Davie wasted in self-controversy had sufficed to work all the work we have been so long in describing, and rendered Lord Roldan an idle sorrower. All was now over: the tide came in with a triumphant swell; but it was only to wash the dead ashore, and show how weak are all the efforts as well as hopes of man, when opposed to that dread destroyer the sea.

In the midst of this scene of distress some one plucked Lord Roldan by the sleeve; it was Captain Corsbane. "Here," said he, "is something which the sea has unwillingly spared—she breathes and revives."

Lord Roldan took the young and fainting creature out of the rough guardianship of Corsbane, committed her to the care of his own servants, aided by Nanse Halberson, and desired that she might be instantly conveyed to the castle. Morison, from whose arms the captain received her, had rushed back to the help of others; the sea, however, had spared none of all that gay company, and when he returned to the shore and sought for her whom he had, even in extreme peril, perceived to be the Lady Rose of the harvest dance, he found but Captain Corsbane. That worthy accosted him with, "She's off damme!—flown away in her wet feathers—she was worth the plucking too, for she sported her mother's best jewels." He thrust one hand into his bosom, and with the other shaking Morison by the fingers hastened away, nor awaited further speech.

A thought akin to suspicion rushed upon the mind of Morison concerning the captain; he had observed something twinkle in the opening of that worthy's vest, as he turned to begone. He darted after him like lightning, and the speed he exerted was necessary, for the captain was already descending the rugged pathway down the cliff to his boat, when Morison overtook him. "Captain Corsbane," said Morison, "one word—the young lady—Rose Roldan, she whom I saved, has lost—dropped I should have said—some of the valuable trinkets to which you alluded."

"Well, and what then?" said the worthy of the sea, with perfect composure.

"Well," continued Morison, "bid me tell her that you have preserved them, and will deliver them to her when she recovers—I saw them glittering in your bosom."

Corbane, when he first beheld Morison approach, felt for his pistols; but if his first emotion was hostile, he had now changed it—he smiled as he answered, “Why, ay, damme! I had forgot that. I did pick up two articles of female gear in the hurry—thank ye, lad, for reminding me. There they are.” He put a pair of diamond bracelets into the other’s hand, and added, “Don’t be in such a hurry with your interrogatories next time, my young friend; and more, don’t come to me with so much blood in your brow and fire in your eyes. I carry a brace of trinkets here that have sobered the looks of some fine impetuous fellows in their day.”

“And I,” said Morison, in the same tone, “carry a couple of ready friends here,” pointing to his pistols; “and the powder is not wetted.” So saying, he waved good-night to the captain, and vanished behind a cliff before that worthy could determine whether to continue to play the friend or put on the bully.

We left Lady Winifred seated on the top of the castle of Roldan; though now waxing old, her eyes were bright, and she could see clearly to a great distance. Her heart danced as she saw the ship which carried her long absent and best beloved son rising, with swelling canvass and pennants spread, out of the sea, nor did she remove her eyes from the bay, but sat in silence; and when any of her attendants uttered a word, she waved her hand impatiently, to intimate that she wished no vulgar joy to intrude on her silent delight. But as the vessel neared the port, Lady Winifred seemed troubled, and the trouble evidently came from the sky. She looked on all sides: the air was quiet and in repose, and betokened nothing of the whirlwind which was so nigh: “Who is this!” she cried when she beheld Davie running towards the castle. “If he has aught to say about Lord Thomas, bring him here and that quickly.”

The messenger was conducted half breathless into the presence of Lady Winifred, and with some ado—for haste and awe impeded his utterance—he delivered his message.

“And who presumed to send you on such an errand?” exclaimed Lord Roldan.

“A witch,” replied Davie, briefly.

“A witch!” said Lord Roldan with a laugh. “Go back and tell her if there are no stakes and tar barrels for impostors now, there are jouggs and scourges for leasing-making.”

Davie shrugged his shoulders and said dauntlessly, “Some one else maun deliver these hard words to Nanse Halberson. I hae nae wish to be turned into a tinkler’s messan, and made to turn a spit in Purgatory.”

“Nanse Halberson!” said the lady, alarmed; “this is no jest; she sees what I have for this half hour felt. Haste,

Lord Roldan, haste! else may a mother's curse cling to you—haste to the bay and give thy brother help—for, oh God and his saints! he is about to need it."

Lord Roldan hurried to his horse and flew to the shore; the wind which had wrought its will in the bay nigh seized him on the road; it passed so close that it all but unseated him; it crushed in a moment the rising mills of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, scattering the machinery like chaff; smashed the trysting tree of Glengarnock—to the sorrow of many a fair face—and exhausted its fury on the falcon tower of Roldan, which it lifted from the summit of the ancient fortalice, and threw into a neighbouring linn, without so much as scattering a fragment on its way. Slowly, slowly Lord Roldan returned from the bay; he was met by a messenger, who requested him to hasten; he had scarcely put spurs to his horse, ere another met him, and said, "Ride, my lord, ride, Lady Winifred seems in the dead thraw!" The horse, urged by spur, by whip, and by word, cleared the ground, and Lord Roldan, scaling the stairs with the quickness of a bird, was in a moment at his mother's side. She was still sitting in her chair, her hands were clasped over her breast as if in prayer; her eyes were fixed on the bay—she was dead! The attendants told that when she heard the ship was gone to pieces and all on board had perished, she clasped her hands on her bosom and her lips moved; nor did she alter her posture, till Rose Roldan, with her ringlets wet, and her face as pale as death, was half carried to her—she laid her hand on her head and said, "Bless thee!—bless thee! An ancient name goes out in the land—goes out in darkness, and not in light as it came in."

There was grief both in cottage and hall for the sudden eclipse which the house of Roldan had suffered. The wrath of Heaven was visible in it, but various were the causes to which that wrath was imputed; John Cargill, the Cameronian, beheld in it a judgment for the blood of the saints shed on the banks of the Elfin-burn, by the persecuting lord, where their gravestones are still to be seen. William Johnston, the seceder, said it was for adherence to the scarlet church of erroneous Rome, after that godly man Simon Inglis had preached against its abominations. Others were willing to find it in the evil courses to which the two brothers had delivered themselves up; Jeanie Rabson of Howeboddom, and Dominie Milligan, averred, that it had happened because Lord Roldan was a perjured person, and hinted that his own time was at hand. While not a few, and Nanse Halberson was of the number, averred that it was an accident in the course of nature, and that the Lord meant no particular harm to the Roldans more than to any other name, seeing that many a mother had lost her son, and many a

wife her husband, in the same ship, though no one made moan for them save their own relations. For this Nanse Halberson was called thrice over a witch and a doubter in a special providence, at which the said Nanse laughed, and observed that all who thought God showed any spite in the matter were special fools.

On the morning which succeeded these disasters, Morison sought out Nanse, and putting the diamond bracelets into her hand, told her how he obtained them, and desired her to give them to the Lady Rose as soon as she well could; for he felt uneasy lest she should imagine he had taken them from her person under pretence of saving her life.

"The captain's a kittle neighbour," said Nanse; "and I can tell ye yere a bauld lad that dared to beard him as ye did: but dinna be uneasy; Rose has a sort of consciousness that she was in rougher hands than yours when she was deprived of this gear. Oh, Morison, she's a fine lass, and spoke sic things about ye! Oh, but it happened ill, the auld lady's decease: I had aye till now a sort of hope that she—that's to say, when she kenned Morison Roldan as well as I do—would gar justice be done to his mother, which was the same as doing justice to yersel ye ken. But that star's dropped frae the firmament of hope."

The brow of the young man darkened down as Nanse concluded her speech. "Some hope of the kind," he said, "now and then brightened within me; but it arose more from a belief in the sense of honour and justice in the heart and soul of Lord Roldan himself, than from any trust in the influence of his mother or my own slender merits."

"Weel, weel," said Nanse, "dinna despair; ye ken I aye prophesied fortune fair and lordly to you; not because I am a witch and sell favourable winds to such honourable persons as your friend Dick Corsbane; but because I am an observer of minds and hearts, and oh! Morison, man, ye will use nature ill and neglect noble opportunities if ye dinna fulfil all that I have spaed. Sae, cheer up yere heart, since the power that's to lift ye up comes in defiance of rank and birth, and springs from the man alone. Cheer up, I say; I never heard of onybody sticking up in the world but ane, and that was Lot's wife." Morison smiled, and returned warmly her grasp of the hand. "Ae word mair," she said; "dinna just be ony oftener amang the cliffs and caverns on the shore than what is necessary: the captain takes queer notions in his head, carries pistols in his pocket, owns four faces, and a' fause anes, and has some rough comrades to help him. But I'm saying, what a scatterment the wind has made of the wheel within a wheel of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company. My trowth! but crazy Willie, of the Starry-heugh, was right about 'the coming wo,' though erroneous about the agent."

CHAPTER XII.

And wear thou this, she solemn said :
 And bound the holly round my head ;
 The polished leaves and berries red
 Did rustling play :
 And, like a passing thought, she fled
 In light away.

BURNS.

BUT though the wheels and machinery of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, were scattered by the winds of heaven, and though the Elfin-burn, asserting its natural rights, and sweeping away all the new embankments, had returned once more to the crooked courses from which it was reclaimed, yet such was the fortitude of industry, that the embankments were recommenced on a more abiding principle, and the mills resumed on a more stable plan, and the whole promised by the middle of autumn to establish that golden age of which the foundations were laid by science, and the whole matured by talent. It was otherwise with the house of Roldan: the hope of the name was lost when Lord Thomas died, and Lord Roldan alone, whom none loved, was left to maintain it. About the birth of Lady Rose a mystery hung, which it was believed none living could or was willing to clear; the peasantry, who loved her for her hard fortune chiefly, for they seldom saw her, always spoke of her as the poor lassie of Roldan, or the sweet maiden Rose; but few ventured to call her lady since Nickie Neevison was rebuked by Lady Winifred, and told that titles put foolish notions in the heads of young creatures. Some ventured even to say, that "since nae better might be, it would be a good thing if Morison and Rose could make a buckle on't, for where was the harm? Naeboddy kenned whether they were sib or no, and it was clear they were the last of the race, for not a drop of the blude was kenned to run in other veins." It seemed clear to the peasantry that the house of Roldan was to be extinguished, and its doom was in every one's mouth.

The head of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, alone sought to cheer and comfort the public mind. "Wherefore all this lamentation?" said Hugh; "a new era has arisen, and old dynasties are dying out. Flesh and blood are frail things; the old house of Douglas is to be found but in an old song; the house of Maxwell has lost the roof-tree; the house of Kirkpatrick, like Willie Watson's thornbush, if it has gone little back, it has gone as little for-

ward: and here's the house of Roldan, a puff of wind and a wave of the sea have turned it tapselteerie. But look at our house—the house, I mean, of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Wast, and Company—it has been preached against; madmen have arisen against it at midnight; nay, the wind which demolished the house of Roldan has done small harm to me, for look and behold we are founded in science and philosophy, and are rising more vigorous from our overthrow. We will soon be as lords in the land, so dry your tears and compose your looks; and, moreover, we will be lords by sea as well as by land; we have a vessel preparing to swim against the will of the wind and tide, and run up the rivers as well as down them. Rejoice, therefore: all that is old will be removed or recast in a new spirit, and the whole earth will be united in one vast bond of science and philosophy.”

“It's really grand,” said Nickie Neevison, “to hear your saillless body preach about the golden age of wheels, and reels, and machines, and steam barges; but his idol is Mammon, and he cares nae mair for God's image than he cares for the trinnel of a wheelbarrow.”

Morison had much to think on, and little to do; all the books in Glengarnock he had half learned by heart; had mastered all he had attempted, and it was believed he could carry matters no further till deeper scholars than Dominie Milligan took him up at college. He was not, however, idle: he could not for his soul be idle; yet the verses which he composed but to burn, and the prose characters of men which he drew but to tear in pieces, did anything but satisfy an ambition that raged like an imprisoned demon for a vent to get out at. The scorn heaped upon him by Mattie Anderson had checked his spirit for love adventure; his pride rose and protected him against further humiliation; and though he had met her several times at dances and festivals, he spoke to her just as he had always done save on one memorable night. His own condition had in truth begun to occupy his whole attention, and he walked but to think, and slept but to dream of his future lot. Sometimes he half regretted that his sternness with Corabane hindered him from trying a voyage or two with that worthy; for he had but a faint suspicion, and no more, of his real character, and never regarded him as a pirate, a kidnapper, and a murderer—and Captain Corabane was them all.

His mother thought Morison demented—“No; but he is kind—oh! aboon a measure kind to me,” she said in confidence to Jeanie Rabson; “but he wanders, d'ye ken, lass, at night by himself; the mair bogly the bits the better for him; and whiles he asks me anent the spirit which appears in the first night of the full moon of July, to all who are of the house of Roldan, and whether they maun bide all night—God have a care on us in the Ladye Chapel, and await its time.

But waur nor a', I doubt he has taken to the writing of verses—oh, Jeanie, woman; the true bitterness of my lot was never felt till now; to think that my bairn is turned a ballad-maker, and a blackguard is mair than my heart can haud. He ay burns his rhymes, sae he's no wholly hardened yet, and there's hope."

"Hope! baubles!" said Jeanie Rabson; "what the waur is he, but something the better of being able to write poetry; d'ye no ken that sweet story the Gentle Shepherd; and d'ye no ken Ross's Heilenore? I read them whiles sae late on a Saturday e'en, that I daurna look the clock for fear it should turn out Sunday."

"Oh Jeanie, and is that poetry!—then atweel I have nae objection to Morison's writing poetry, for I'm unco pleased with these books myself."

"I'll talk to him about this and other things," said the heiress.

The night on which this conversation happened was one of the loveliest of the closing month of summer, and when Morison came home he found Jeanie Rabson standing with his mother at the gorge of the glen, in the act of parting. "Ye're weel come, lad," said the heiress of Howeboddum, "for I was just thinking of asking the head of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, to set me hame in a philosophic and scientific way." So saying, she took his arm, and turned her face homeward, with a slow step. When she got from among the roans of bushes which fringed the glen, and saw nothing around but the plain brae side, the heiress began to speak. "Morison," she said, "ye are maist a man now, and as ye can save a lass frae drownin—scorn ane wha scorns you, and chase a saucy fellow and lend him a lounder—aye ye needna look that queer gate, for it's a' true, it came to me frae a sure hand, and I like ye the better for't—but I was gaun to say that ye are maist a man now, and nae doubt anxious about yere way-gate in the world. I ance, d'ye ken, entered into Mary's views about the ministry—but dinna jump away now—there's owre mickle of the Roldan blude about ye for that—ye wad be looking mair at the rosie part of the parishioners, than at the bearings o' the text. Now we have thought, ye see, as there's nae nearer heirs to the Rabson's of Howeboddum than that feckless winnelstrae saulless body of Cowplat, and as neither his—James's I mean—marriage nor mine will interfere, it wad be a rest and repose to our minds to hae the thing settled—we have resolved, therefore, to make our own bairn, Morison, laird of Howeboddum—but I'm saying, lad, we winna let it spunk out just yet, else a' the weel-faured giglet gawpies from Lochmaben to the Mull will be setting their caps at the young laird—that is to be, of Howeboddum."

Morison wist not well what to say ; at last he stammered out—for his heart was at his lips, and the tears in his eyes —“ It is like you, Jeanie, and it is like your brother ; but I cannot accept such a gift ; my heart is set on far lands and more stirring scenes than this—where I shall either make a name, or return no more.”

“ Weel, weel !” said Jeanie Rabson, “ I am nae averse to your sojourning for a time in foreign lands ; though mony’s the fair face that gangs out and never returns ; Howeboddom winna rin awa, and in our hands it will be aye growing better. I kenned weel enough you would be for pushing your fortune ; I hae lang observed ye looking beyond Glen-garnock hills. But when do ye think of ganging, Morison ; and whare d’ye think of ganging, and what in the wide world do you intend to do ?”

Morison answered, “ I care not whither I go, east or west, or north or south ; and as for what I’ll do, if naught better chances, I shall e’en offer myself to some poor people whom the kings and nobles of the earth oppress—there are such in the world—and die or live with them. Who cares for such a creature as Morison Roldan, the poor bastard boy ?”

“ I care for ye, Morison, and James Rabson cares for ye, and your mother cares for ye—and aboon a’ God cares for ye, and ye will forget him when ye cast your young life awa in the daft gate ye talk of. Na, na ! that mauna be.”

“ It must be, Jeanie,” exclaimed Morison ; “ I cannot dwell in the land where my birth is a continual reproach. When I perilled my own life to redeem yon lovely creature from the sea, what a clapping of hands there would have been had it been performed by any one else—nay, I think as her sense returned, she looked on me as if she was even sorry to have her life saved by such hands. Even Mattie of Fourmerkland, whose whole soul is in a sows-lug purse, made my birth a matter of scorn.”

The heiress smiled, and said, “ It sets Mattie Anderson weel to gie hersel airs : her father herded the hirsel of Howeboddom, and made his plack a bawbee, and no sae fairly neither—and her a black smout of a thing ; walks intaet and has a beard—I wonder what ye see about her !”

To this Morison answered, “ I think, however, that to look about me in another land for a year or two would be beneficial. But, Jeanie, there’s ae thing I have made up my mind about, and that is, not even to step in between that sackless, soulless sumph of Cowplat and Howeboddom. I have been robbed of my own proper inheritance of unstained birthright, and I shall never, if I can help it, wrong others out of theirs.”

“ Heighho !” said Jeanie, “ there’s nae robbing in the matter—Howeboddom shall gang to the poor—it shall endow a house and a hame for the helpless mad, and the sack-

less insane, before it gangs to Cowplat. Besides, the thing's a' settled; fairly down in black and white; signed and sealed as the saying is. Jean Rabson"—and she withdrew her arm from Morison's, and stood an inch taller—"Jean Rabson never says ae thing and does another; when she says hae she means hae. But, my bairn," and she placed her hand on his, and looked kindly in his face, "just whisper to me when ye are minded to gang abroad, and I hae some siller which even our James disnae ken of, which will be better in your pouch than in a hole of the wa', and may be useful even in foreign parts. But, oh Morison! do naething rashly." On this they parted; Jeanie returned to Howeboddom, and Morison turned his face to the Elfin-glen.

He turned his face homeward—his thoughts dwelt on his own condition, and on his probable lot in life. He fell into a fit of musing; he crossed in fancy stormy seas; he braved perils on land and water; he saw strange countries and splendid cities rising before him—but all his visions ended in strife and bloodshed. Wheresoever he went, his fancy supplied the very wind with a tongue to hollo bastard in his ear; and wherever he looked, he saw fierce looks and opposing hands. He was awoke—for we may safely call such reveries dreaming—by the startled cry of an owl, and pausing and looking, he found himself a full mile out of his way home, and almost within the shadow of the Ladye Chapel. "It is strange," he said, "on going a road of my own choosing, and to keep tryst with Mattie Anderson—black smout she may be, but Jeanie was dreaming about the beard—heaven and earth, land and water, seemed up in arms to oppose me; nay, a rival's envy was pushed into my path. And now, in this road, which I never dreamed of, not only do all the stars smile, and the winds consent, and the air allure with its balminess, but I am kept in a sort of mental delirium, and know not where I am wandering till the haunted chapel rises before me. There seems to be a meaning—a providence in this. I shall at least disabuse my fancy of an impression which it has received. This, too, is the fated time: the first night of the full moon of July. I shall call on the spirit, which legends say abides within these holy walls, and as a Roldan, though a bastard one, ask it what my fate is to be: if it be silent and refuse to show itself, I shall proclaim the legend a lie, and the Ladye Spirit a figure of the imagination, and put faith in naught but reason and resolution." Having half thought and half uttered these sentiments he entered the ruin.

It might be ten o'clock: the place was lonesome; the woods which enclosed it were gloomy; some of the trees hoary, and dropping to pieces from extreme age; while here and there thick, and at the same time lofty groves, or rather bowers of holly, with polished leaves and ruddy berries, glit-

tered to the stars, and seemed to hem it in with a natural wall. The chapel itself rose high above the trees, and was still an elegant ruin: the marks of the besiegers in two hurried border raids were visible on the south side, where a mount had been thrown up against it, and artillery placed; but the firebrand of reformation had fallen on its roof, and consuming all that could be consumed, left it to the tender mercies of a zealous and illiterate mob, who mistaking Jesus Christ for Judas Iscariot, and St. Andrew and St. Allan, the patron saints of the house of Roldan, for the two thieves, smashed them to pieces. Nor did a Virgin Mary, whom they mistook for the lady of Babylon, fare any better; in short, the hammer of the congregation was laid upon all that bore the aspect of man, or appeared in the shape of beast; and nothing escaped save the massive walls, whose solid construction set at naught the hasty impulse of zeal under which tenderer matters were crushed like the flower beneath the furrow.

All around and between the chapel and the greenwood a continuous sward, nibbled close by sheep, and soft as velvet, extended, save on the eastern side, which was occupied by a stream, in other places shallow, and of small volume, but here deep and broad, and calm and clear as a looking-glass; the chapel, the woods, and all stable things, including a few stars, were brightly imaged out. The extreme beauty and extreme loneliness of the place—for it stood within the policies of the castle—were felt strongly by Morison, who, having made a circuit or two round the walls, entered the chapel—not without additional reverence in his step, and an increase of awe at heart. The rubbish had been removed; the greensward had crept in from the outside and extended itself like a carpet over the whole floor, while several flowering shrubs rooting themselves in the jointed stones, threw down their tassels and tendrils till they approached the ground; gravestones, and the full-length figures of recumbent warriors—but broken and defaced—were placed against the wall, but so as not to obstruct the entrances to two or three little cells or chambers which were partly wrought out of the solid wall, and partly projected into the interior, masked and surmounted by carved screens of the richest Gothic workmanship.

Morison seated himself on a broken fount: he looked at the starlight, for the moon was unrisen, glimmering through the fractured shafts of the windows; at some dozen or so of stars swimming in tranquil beauty, apparently rather in the clear air than in the blue sky above the shattered roof; and he listened to each sound, whether of the greenwood or of the stream, which gave a momentary voice to the tranquillity of the night. He could not help saying to himself that other sights had been witnessed by the stars on the spot

where he sat than ruins worthy only of the bat and the owl; and that other sounds than the murmur of the brook had been heard by those of his name when they knelt at the altar, and hung their banners up after battle or tournament. As he continued to sit and muse, the gentle sounds of the night, and the quiet glory of the air and sky became more audible and visible; the cry of the owl from the ivy bower; the voice of the fox on the shaggy hill; the streamlet of his native glen, dropping from rock to rock, and from linn to linn; and the motion of the mouse over the velvet sward, with its cry scarcely more distinct than the rustle of its feet, were all in his ear by turns; nay, he imagined the ticking of his watch was louder than usual, and that he heard his pulse beat. He shut his eyes for a minute or so, and when he opened them he thought the splendour of the night increased; he stopped his ears, and when he removed his fingers he imagined that the voice of the stream was louder; but when a star shot brightly along the sky and seemed to drop on the Ladye Chapel, he thought he heard its sigh in the air; it came also across his mind, that if earth held aught unearthly, now was the time for its appearance. These preparations on the part of nature, however, ushered in nothing, and Morison watched till his sight grew not only weary but dim: he leaned against the wall, and closing his eyes, indulged himself with a mental vision, since it seemed he was not to be honoured with a real one. With the stars above his head and the night dews under his feet, Morison mused on the spirit which tradition gave to the Ladye Chapel, and on Lady Rose with the long locks and the bright eyes, whom he rescued from the wreck. He hesitated to believe that amid the tranquil beauty of such a scene the spirit would appear, but wished in his heart that some hand, he cared not whether of this world or the next, would lift the dark cloud from the future; he dared the spirit of the place to show itself.

When afterward relating his dream or vision, Morison at this place made a pause, and intimated that the conclusion of the scene seemed to partake of both worlds. That it was wholly real he could not believe; that it was altogether visionary he felt it impossible to persuade himself, since he had substantial tokens to the contrary. In truth, he considered it part real and part imaginary, and that actual events were mingled wondrously with a sleeper's dream.

He heard, as he dared the spirit to show itself, a sound resembling the rustling of silks and the rushing of wings, mingled with whispering tongues, in which he imagined his own name was named. The air grew calm in a moment, and breathed of dew and balm; an approaching light, like the radiance of a star, sparkled along the floor, and glimmered upon the walls around. While he sat wondering, a female

form, with a wreath of flowers in her left hand and a sword in her right, entered the ruin, and at once walked up to him. She was of great beauty: her feet, though bare, were jewelled, for they twinkled as she walked, and her locks, though long and unbound, seemed fixed to her neck and shoulders by some invisible means—while the wind waved them they shone and sparkled as if sown with diamonds. Her dress was wholly white, and reached from her neck below her knees. She looked full in Morison's face, exhibiting the wreath and sword, and appeared desirous to be spoken to; but awe and something else kept him silent, for his visitant seemed now of this world and now of the other, and sometimes of both. At one moment he was about to address her as the Lady Rose, for a smile glanced over her features which reminded him of the dance in which she was his partner—in another moment he felt disposed to fly from her presence, so much did she seem a spirit.

At last she spoke: the voice was gentle but commanding. "Morison Roldan," she said, "why are you here—why do you abide in a land where the words of the meanest churl pain you—whose sons call you base born, and whose daughters think it a reproach to be seen with you in the dance, or under the trysting tree? Your destiny calls you elsewhere—go! be seen in this land no more till your name and fame are such that your native place shall welcome you back even as June welcomes her roses. Abide, and wo awaits you; wo, which will come upon you as a blast of evil wind when it blights the flower in the field—as the breath of the elf that blights the babe on the mother's knee." She had spoken thus far, when heavy steps and the rustling of the holly boughs intimated the approach of more than one person. She held up her finger, dropped the sword at his feet, and vanished.

Morison started up, and was about to follow, when two figures suddenly entered the ruin, whom he at once perceived to be Lord Roldan and Captain Corebane. He stepped back, withdrew silently into the crypt, from which a stair ascended to the summit of the ruin, and with one foot on the first step listened to their conversation, adjusting at the same time his pistols, which he carried with him on all excursions, and holding the sword, the gift of the spirit, in his hand. It was as well he listened, for the conversation concerned him nearly.

"You surprise me!" said Lord Roldan. "Where can the boy have acquired all this knowledge—and above all, who has taught him, and for what purpose has he learned such exercises?"

"How am I to know?" said the captain. "I live, you know, on sea, and Morison dwells on land? But that he has acquired them is certain. 'Gad! I did but say something to

him about the necessity of a knowledge of his weapon if he desired to prosper on salt water, when out he whips a pistol, and damme ! at five-and-twenty paces, knocked the head off a sea hawk with a single ball, else may I never more snap flint over powder."

"Well," replied Lord Roldan, "he takes after his race. But you know how much I have been harassed about this boy: the rude clouterly sons of the sheepfold and the furrow cannot pass without insulting me either about his mother or himself. 'You are a base person,' cries one; 'for Mary Morison was better and bonnier than the worthiest of your kin.' 'And you are but a cruel lord and a cursed fool,' cries a second; 'for there's no such a lad for beauty and talent in the south country as poor Morison Roldan.' And it was but this morning that a foul old woman—folk more foolish than herself believe her to be a witch—told me boldly to my face that I should live to weep tears of blood and utter sighs that would scald me, for not at once owning, as she called it, my marriage with his mother, and making him the heir of my land and name."

Captain Corsbane hitched up his cutlass belt, took a stride or two across the floor, and then said, "So Nanse is in the song, too? Then damme if I know what to say about it! She mayn't be such a witch as Mother Carey, who sold her carrion sea fowl for barn-door chickens; nor yet so far ben with old Lucifer as Dame Heckles of Lapland, from whom we could not only buy a blasted good wind, but success in battle too! No: Nanse mayn't be altogether a witch, but damme if I feel any inclination to cross her! Didn't she foresee the storm that laid Lord Thomas in the hollow of Glengarnock Bay? And didn't she prophesy—and a cursed long yarn she made of it—didn't she prophesy that I should get more cuffs than crusadoes if I ventured into the Spanish Main? If Nanse be in the song, I know not what to say."

"But I know," said Lord Roldan, "what to do as well as what to say. I will ensure you for a groat against all the storms that Nanse can raise: so you must even perform this little bit of work for me. I tell you that it will aid me much, and make your own fortune. You have only to carry him west for a year or so.

"Ay, ay," said the captain; "it is easy to carry, but we must catch him first catch! I tell you what; it must be done warily, else some of us will be floored. I wish you had but seen the audacious whelp when he followed me, and demanded the trinkets which he said I had forgotten—ay! 'forgotten' was his word—to restore to the young lady, your Rose Roldan, you know. Gad! when I bent my brow and touched my belt, he smiled, and pointing with his finger, said, 'My pistols are at hand, too, and the powder is not wetted.' Some of us will be dished; get our broth, damme!"

The speech was interrupted by Lord Roldan, who put a purse of gold into the corsair's hand so far exceeding his hopes, that his tone was instantly changed. "After all," he said, "the boy is a fine boy, and has some maritime taste—five hundred, my lord, is not too much though for the job. I love him, too, because of the spice of the devil, or the house of Roldan—no offence—in his nature; you must make it seven hundred if I dispose of him judiciously. Gad! it's a pleasure to have such a commodity of air and fire on hand; he will be a credit to me in the market; but I tell you again there's risk in it."

During this speech, Lord Roldan listened and looked anxiously around, and signing to Corsbane, pointed to the crypt in which Morison was concealed. The captain turned towards the door, continuing still to speak, unsheathing at the same time his hanger; and just when he said, "there's risk in it," words which he uttered loudly, he reached the recess at a bound, exclaiming, "Yo ho, friend, have I found you!" But a mind so prompt and foot so active were not to be surprised. Morison was a dozen steps in advance even before Corsbane reached the foot of the stair; he ascended with the swiftness of a bird, and reaching a window some twenty feet from the lawn, leaped at once upon the greensward, and dashing into one of the winding glades, made for the Elfin-glen with something of the careless speed of the swallow, which, though hunted by a hawk, seems more to amuse itself in the air than put forth the full force of its wings.

On reaching the brook which ran southward from the ruin, Morison paused, and, looking back, saw Lord Roldan on the top of the wall motioning with his hand to some one on the ground below. "Let him come," Morison muttered, and examined his pistols; "my aim is as sure by the moon—thanks to thee, fair planet, for rising—as it is by the sun. But not amid these treacherous hollies shall I jeopard myself; let him meet me on the bare plain if he dares!" As he said this he started away; for the muttered curse, as well as the crashing bough, told that Corsbane was at hand.

A deep and thickly-wooded glen now interposed, and into this Morison precipitated himself with the alacrity of one to whom each tree, and cavern, and nook was familiar. Often had he sought hind berries, and nuts, and birds' nests in its banks and thickets; and groped trouts for his mother's dinner, as well as his own, in the little basins and pools. All this and more flashed on him as he threaded at full speed its thickets; he thought on his mother's wrongs and on his own; he reflected on the insults to which he was exposed from the base and vulgar minded; and he had heard to-night, with horror, that his own father desired to be rid of him, nor hesitated about the means. He slackened his

pace; he was working his heart into a hardness suitable to the shedding of blood; and as he emerged from the glen and stood on the plain upland, he said, "Not another foot shall I fly for all the sons of men—nay, for all the fiends in hell." As he said this he took out his pistols, turned their locks to the moon, examined the priming, and stamping on the ground, exclaimed, "Two may meet—one only shall go away!"

As he spoke, he looked to the ground, and saw with deep emotion that he was standing on the gravestone of one of the martyrs slain, nay, murdered, in other days for conscience' sake; nor did it lessen the throbbing of his heart when he reflected that the humble peasant who slept in dust below was shot down by the hand of his own ancestor in the act of prayer, and that the inscription echoed but the voice of the country, in calling for vengeance on the house of his destroyer. Morison stepped reverently from the stone, and gazing around him said, "Who has authorized me to come here and shed blood? The martyr fell in the cause of Christ—in the vindication of the truth—in defence of religious freedom; if I fall, it is in revenge of worldly wrongs—not here, not here, must such a thing be;" and he retired a hundred paces or so, and again stood still. He awaited his adversary in vain; Captain Corsbane had no desire to overtake, let alone to face his young foe, and he but followed him down the glen to show that he was zealous, and moreover to ascertain for himself who was the hearkener of their plot. This he made out without personal risk: on reaching the gorge of the glen he slipped into a thicket, and thence by the light of the moon, now risen clear and brilliant, he saw Morison stand on the martyr's stone, and was so near, that he heard some of his exclamations; but all this he resolved to keep to himself.

"You might as well follow three ell of wind," said Corsbane, half breathless, when he returned to the Ladye Chapel, "and hope to overtake it, as pursue such a will o' wisp. New face—don't know him: gad! he moved like a shadow—damme!—like a spirit—are there such things about this place, my lord?" without waiting for an answer, he grumbled into his cravat—"But never mind! your damned clever chaps are always the easiest done; a fellow with a head as thick as a bombshell—a mere ass, who cannot keep the worms from the kale, will outwit and baffle one, while your clever fellow believes in his own wisdom, and swallows like a shark the rancid bacon, damme! rusty hook and all."

"Well, well," said Lord Roldan, "let it pass; but to resume the matter! Mind, do the boy no wrong—harm not a hair of his head—land him in Hispaniola—set him free; give him this purse, and let fortune work her will with him: fail in this, and face me if you dare! You had better leave upper air at once, than seek to deceive me—I have said enough."

"I know you well, my lord," said Corsbane, gruffly, "and that it's not safe to cross your will—as this poor lad, damme! can testify; but I'll bide by bargain; no man, nor lord neither, could ever say that Dick Corsbane broke his word. It's not the first time I have ventured on a losing bargain though: and let me tell you! but for the saucy boldness of this bastard braggart—nay, I meant no harm—damme! if I had undertaken this neat bit of business after all." Here they parted, and Corsbane returned to Glengarnock Bay, revolving in his own mind how he should entrap Morison, of whose courage and promptitude of soul he had some dread. "It could easily be done, damme," he growled, "but the eavesdropping bastard no doubt heard much that passed between his worthy father and me, and will be as wild to lure as a bird in summer. I wish, after all, that I could but win him over to myself; a raw haspan of a callan, and so cursedly clèver, so up to everything—what will he be when he's a man! But damme, that won't do! Dick Corsbane, that cock won't fight. He'll win the men's hearts from me, and take my bonnie Wildfire to himself. Ay, ay, I must stick by the original plan."

The reflections of Lord Roldan were in another mood. He thought on earlier days; on the merits of Mary Morison; nor did he hesitate to do justice to the worth, as well as looks, of the boy whom he had neglected and wronged. But he had wooed and won a lady in another land, and desired to be freed from the reproach of the presence of Morison. As Lady Winifred was gone, and Lord Thomas had perished, he was now sole representative of the name; in the prime of life, and his bride young, he despaired not of heirs; and already saw, in fancy, a long line of descendants and the glory of his name revived in the land. These were matters concealed within his own breast; he shared such secrets with no one, and full of hope, he appeared with a smiling face, and had a kind word to all, and the people of the vale were heard to say, "The deil's no sae ill as he's ca'd—there's hope for Satan yet, since adversity has mended the nature of Lord Roldan."

CHAPTER XIII.

A plague upon both your houses.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Morison entered his little chamber, he removed part of his dress to cool himself, and withdrawing the sword from its sheath, several pieces of gold dropped on the floor. "This blade," he said, "is no vision: it seems good-tempered steel, and here are dints upon it, indicating that it has seen service. Nor are these coins of elfin workmanship, or of visionary gold." He examined the pieces, they were of great value, and of great rarity: coins memorable in Scotland by the name of Bonnet Pieces, and composed of native metal from the mines of Crawford Moor. He looked at the sword, and at the gold again and again: thought over the looks and words of the Ladye Spirit who had come as it were at his bidding, and he lay down but to dream of the adventure, and to see in distant and dim prospect the way to which her words seemed to marshal him.

When he awoke in the morning, other events of the evening pressed on his mind: he thought of Lord Roldan, and the escape which he owed to his own activity and presence of mind. He felt that he was to be made the victim of the baron's pride, and resolved to be on his guard, and not to be surprised into a situation out of which he could only escape by captivity or death; but above all, he determined to go at once to the castle, demand an interview, and require justice at Lord Roldan's hand for his mother and for himself. This resolution was confirmed by another glance at the sword, and by recalling the words of the fair vision that presented it—perhaps he hoped to have an opportunity of comparing the looks of Lady Rose as well as her voice with those of the spirit; nor shall we try to conceal the poetic fancy that flashed on his mind, of persuading the baron to bestow his hand where many believed he had bestowed his heart.

When he had formed this resolution, and dressed himself in his neatest and best attire, his mother entered the chamber. "Morison, my bairn," she said, "what ails you! your sleep is not sound, for I hear you call out in your dreams as if you were fording some deep river, or perilling your life in some heady battle. Oh my bairn, these dreams do not become a preacher of the word: ye should pray,

Morison; ye should do mair than your duty duly morn and night. But it a' comes of these wearyfu' pistols, which, though weapons of your ain kin, my bairn, are weapons of wrath and sorrow. And then ye aye bear them about with ye. What, what will become of us! ye will do some rash act, but I'm glad ye have them not with ye now. Oh let me keep them for ye."

Morison looked in his mother's face, and said, "I take them not with me now, dearest—dearest mother, lest I should be tempted in a moment of passion and agony to use them, where they should not be used. Oh mother! mother! ever since I saw the light of day, this world has been a scene of suffering to me, because I saw that you suffered; and since I began to think and reflect, it has been a scene of suffering to myself, because the wrong which Lord Roldan did to you has been a constant upcast to me by the mean-souled and the brutal-hearted. But I shall know to-day what is to be our fate in the land, or I shall know wherefore."

Mary was alarmed by the words, and more by the looks of her son: she saw that tranquil resolution and inflexibility of purpose written on his brow, which was the basis of her own character, and was alarmed accordingly. "What words are these, my bairn," she said, "and about whom are they spoken?" And she grew pale, and laid both hands on the back of a chair, and supported herself till he should answer.

"They are spoken of Lord Roldan," said Morison, calmly; "I go this morning to the castle to learn from his own lips—" Here the youth paused, and seemed desirous to say no more.

"And learn what, Morison?" said his mother; "have we not all learned enough from that quarter to make us desirous of asking no more: bide at hame, my bairn, and learn to be humble-minded. Oh, aboon a', pray to God to be delivered from folly such as you seem about to commit."

"Mother," said Morison, "you lost your station among the matrons of this land because you had no one to take your part—no father to demand justice for a beloved, a beautiful daughter; no brother to draw his sword in his sister's quarrel, and screen her from a shame which she did not merit; but, mother, you, have a son who now can and who will demand that which is due both to you and to himself. Oh, if you knew all, you would say, Go, my son, go, and a mother's, an injured woman's blessing go with you."

"You talk mysteriously, Morison," she replied; "what have you heard, what have you seen, and what do you know, that has made you so resolute, so self-willed?"

"I have heard, and I have seen enough. My presence is such a reproach to Lord Roldan that he seeks to banish me. I saw the price paid, and I heard the words spoken—but they have yet to take me!"

"My son," said Mary, composedly, and raising her hands, "you but dream; Lord Roldan has greatly, has deeply wronged me; I leave that to God to settle, for vengeance is not mine; but I cannot believe that he means as you say, he has yet enough of nobleness of soul to keep him from that; no, Morison, you have seen wrong, you have heard amiss—and yet, oh my bairn, this is an awful world, and warily must we walk on our way in it."

"I must walk my way warily," said Morison, "for the ship rokes in the bay that has to carry me into slavery. The money of my blood is paid—but I am not yet taken." He passed his mother swiftly as he spoke, and ere she was aware, rushed out of the house, and took his way to Roldan Castle.

The castle and all around presented a new scene to Morison. As he entered the avenue he gazed on the ancient trees, oak, ash, and elm, which stood rather than grew on each side; some of them were wholly dead, and the thick bark had fallen from them in flakes; some were gone in the heart, but green on the outside, and in one or two of them he heard the murmur and the swarming of bees, and imagined the smell of honey scented the air around; not a few had lost immense branches in resisting the sudden winds of the district, and Morison remarked that one only towered up in summer beauty; not a bough was broken, while beneath it a group of deer reposed, and on its summit a thrush, was perched, pouring down its melody through the branches. The gate stood open, and seemed indeed to be seldom closed. Morison walked into the place without hesitation, and stood at once in front of the old baronial pile, which, moated round and guarded with flanking towers, and wearing in its looks the scars of a twofold warfare with time and enemies, rose lofty and strong, and seemed likely to endure for centuries. It was time-worn and neglected, and allowed to trust to the strength of its masonry for preservation; the arms of the family were nearly obliterated, the fountains which had for centuries thrown up their rainbows of water as high as the battlements were choked up, and a formidable figure of a hunter, called by the rustics Jock and the Horn, whose province had been to blow water over the lawn, lay smashed in two. Tradition, which will allow little to be done in a common way, said the statue was struck down by a thunderbolt.

Morison looked but for a moment on this unwonted sight; he had that on his heart which permitted him but to glance his eye over the scene, and to see that it was fair. He went to the entrance in the front; the door stood open, and an old man who sat dozing in a large chair looked on him strangely, and said, "What would you, young sir? what would you?"

Morison turned full upon him, and replied, "I come to speak to Lord Roldan."

The voice and look seemed to bewilder the porter. "Wha can he be, that has got the Roldan tongue, and the Roldan glance, that I dinna ken?" he muttered; "and wha shall I say desires to speak to Lord Roldan? What name am I to give?"

"I have no name," said Morison, colouring; "but before I leave this castle I shall have one—so show me the way to the hall of audience, else I must seek it for myself."

"A right Roldan, by the blessed Mary!" exclaimed the old man; "sae I'll e'en show him ben to my lord, as sure as my name's John Carruders." With steps which on the even floors of the castle were infirm and tottering, did John Carruders conduct the youth till he came to the large door, which, unclosing at the middle, admitted visitors to what the peasantry called the judgment hall. He touched a spring, the doors expanded, and ushering Morison in, he said, "A young gentleman to speak with Lord Roldan," retired, and left him to make the rest of his way himself.

Lord Roldan was seated in the carved chair in which his mother died; a hat and plume, with buff gloves, such as those worn by cavaliers of the civil wars, lay carelessly beside him; while a sword, sheathed, supported his right hand, and his eyes, cast upward, seemed to intimate that he was sitting in judgment. The youth bowed slightly, and walking up firmly and composedly, said, "I am the son of Mary Morison, and I come to speak to Lord Roldan."

Lord Roldan looked on him with some surprise, and not without some emotion of heart, and then said, "Wait a few moments, young man." He continued silent for a little while and then said aloud, "Raeburn, leave me for five minutes, and when my seneschal comes to you, return. I like what you have done greatly; there is nature without any affectation, and breadth and vigour without minute detail. You have massed the whole boldly." The painter bowed to the compliment, and retired; nor deeply as Morison felt his own situation, did he fail to observe that the eminent artist had produced a noble likeness, nor missed the melancholy air peculiar to the Lords of Roldan.

He was about to rise from his chair, when Morison said, "Sit still—I come to Lord Roldan for justice, and I think it a good omen to find him in the judgment seat."

The father looked on the son—remarked his noble looks and bold expression, to which the throb of his heart lent dignity; nor did he fail to observe his handsome form and graceful air. "What is it you want, young man—what do you desire of me? Take time and reflect; I shall not willingly say you nay."

"It requires neither time nor reflection," said the youth;

"what I desire may be expressed in few words. They are these: Father, marry my mother." He folded his arms over his bosom, looking sadly, but not without hope, in his father's face.

"Sir," replied Lord Roldan, with a calm voice, "you desire what may not be. This is indeed the first time that any one has dared to speak to me on this matter; but it is not the first time it has been present to my own mind. Your mother was lovely—nay, is lovely still—for I see her when she knows not I am nigh; and she is better than beautiful—she is good and noble minded. But were she the loveliest and best of all the daughters of Adam, there is a gulf which separates us that cannot be passed: with one of the menials of this house Lord Roldan would think it infamy to wed. Now do you understand me?"

"I hear you, my lord," said Morison, "and I understand you; but your ideas are not mine, nor are they of nature or of God. The rank at the foot of which, like a bloody idol of old, you sacrifice the beauty and the worth which you de-luded, is but a poor distinction invented by man, and be-stowed often, not on God Almighty's noblemen, but on the base and the servile. It is at the best a stamp which is doomed to wear out, and as it pleases God to give genius of the highest order to men born in the lowest condition, it would be well if high lords and mighty earls received it as a rebuke of their presumption, and admitted, with humility, that God after all knew best."

"These sentiments," replied Lord Roldan, and not with-out something like an offended tone, "are not new; they are the words with which the vulgar sooth themselves when they see the noble and the far-descended go past; they are the offspring of vulgar envy, and entertained by those born and educated in a lowly station. I have heard that you are fond of poetry; did you ever observe the sky in a cloud-less night? there is the moon, there are the planets, and there are the common stars—this is the order of God; yet there are greater and lesser lights. You see even the rules of nature sustain the dignities who govern the earth." He rose from his chair as he spoke; paced slowly along the floor; sometimes glancing at his son, sometimes at the pic-tures of his ancestors, with which the walls were crowded: he paused when Morison spoke.

"And is this the answer a son is to receive who comes to demand redress of deep wrongs and rankling injuries?" ex-claimed the youth, placing his hat on his brow, and confront-ing Lord Roldan with a look which might have passed for the reflection of his own, since pride and burning anger were painted on both. "You should have remembered your far-descended lineage when you made vows to my mother which you have broken like dicers' oaths; you should have

thought on the infamy, proud lord, which you were bringing upon the guileless and the innocent by your false oaths; and more, you should have dreaded that your guilty, your infamous love might create something so truly your own image in body and mind, that it would, in the fulness of time, demand justice as I do now, and think of vengeance on its rejection." He laid his hand on Lord Roldan's sword as he spoke, balanced it for a moment, then tossed it from him to his father's feet, and added, "Let me die by the hand of him who gave me being, since he refuses to make that being endurable."

It would have seemed to a witness of this strange scene, that Lord Roldan was neither affected nor incensed by the bold language of his son: he had made up his mind on the matter, and resolved on all that he was to say or do. "Young man," he said, as he kicked the sword aside, "such words and such actions are unbecoming; but I overlook and forgive them."

"If they are unbecoming, my lord," said Morison, bowing, "it but shows that he to whom I owe my being has not been solicitous about my education."

"I must, I see," replied the baron, "be brief. You have come to desire that I should wed your mother. Sooner shall Glengarnock flow run into the Solway—sooner—"

Here he was interrupted by a servant, who, in breathless haste, and neglectful of all ceremony, burst into the hall, exclaiming, "It's fulfilled—it's fulfilled! the prophecy is gude and true! Ye may see it from the castle, my lord. What will happen next!"

"And what has happened now, sirrah?" said Lord Roldan; "has Criffel sunk in Solway?"

"Oh waur nor that!" cried the messenger; "Glengarnock flow has ta'en to the sea: I saw it running down the brae a mile wide, and ten feet deep, as black as ink: the hares fled first, and had ye but seen the linnets and lave-rocks, poor harmless things!"

Lord Roldan could not for his heart avoid looking at Morison: he motioned the messenger away, and then said, "This is a strange coincidence: I shall deal no more in vows."

He paused, and Morison sharply said, "Had vows never been made, or better kept, I should not have stood a hopeless suppliant here in my father's hall to-day."

"Sirrah, sirrah!" exclaimed the baron; "rein that malapert tongue of thine, and listen. With thy mother I may not wed. Thou art, indeed, my son, and—"

"My lord," replied Morison, his heart swelling, his brow burning, and his eyes flashing, "sooner shall I call the meanest wretch who infests the earth father! I have no

father—this is the first time I have pronounced the name—it shall be the last !”

“ I could find a way to restrain all this,” was the answer of the baron ; “ but it is needless ; a spirit so insolent and intractable will be admonished ere it breathes long in the world. Since you will accept none of my help and follow none of my counsel, I must desire you to begone—leave this house instantly, and take such fate as awaits you.”

“ The fate which awaits me, sir,” said Morison, “ is not, perhaps, such as you desire—not such as you have planned—not such as you have paid for. A brighter lot will, I know, be mine. The bastard boy of Mary Morison goes out in darkness to come back in light ; the day is not distant when you will be glad to be forgotten. Farewell ! but not for ever.” He bowed to Lord Roldan, walked calmly forth, bestowed a crown piece on the aged porter, and passing through the gate, entered the avenue of aged trees which led from the castle.

His way home lay nigh the Ladye Chapel, and thither did he direct his steps, not to gaze at the ruins, but rather to commune with his own mind, and form some resolution amid his hopes and his despair respecting his future life. He sat down on the same stone which he had occupied on the evening before : the sun was shining through the shattered roof instead of the stars ; for the cry of the owl he had the song of the thrush, and the amorous wail of the wood dove mingled with the murmur of the running stream—the sight and the sound soothed him. He smiled, and folding his arms over his bosom, made his thoughts audible. “ What,” he murmured, “ is there in this lot of mine that should make me despair ? I am young ; I am strong ; I am active. I can do anything which I set my mind for.”

“ Then,” said a sharp charking voice beside him, “ I wish ye would be a clerk to the great firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, for our assistant died yesterday. He complained of fourteen hours of quilldriving daily, and as Treddles avers actually kicked the bucket for the purpose of nonplussing us in the commencement of our great undertaking.” The speaker stepped into the chapel : it was Hugh Heddles himself, and the offer was made in all sincerity, for he had observed the character of Morison, and prophesied that the lad would either make a spoon or spoil a horn, as the tinker’s proverb words it.

Morison, who remembered his own lofty language in the castle, felt that to sit down as a clerk in the firm of this new company, however much it suited his desolate condition, was quite out of keeping with his hopes as well as his wishes ; he therefore civilly declined the proposal and rose to begone.

"Nay, nay," said the manufacturer, "don't be disturbed for me; I come not, I warrant you, to look on the open stitch, herringbone sort of work of this old rickle, and rave about its beauty when the moon is at the full; yet I dare say the grassplot about it would do capitally to bleach linen on, though not equal to our new scientific process; but I come to examine the capabilities of the place, to see to what use I could turn this burn here: water is a beautiful arm in science; wherever there is a fall of water there is a diamond mine. Ye don't understand that now?"

"I only know," said Morison, "that running water turns wheels, that wheels move machinery, and that by means of machinery many of the wants of man are supplied at a cheaper rate than heretofore."

"Then ye are in a fair way of comprehending," said Heddles, "the great philosophical principles on which the whole science of domestic and national economy is founded, and that makes me regret the more that ye refuse to fill the place of Robert Telfer, a hard-working creature, but far from bright—killed himself as Treddles avers to nonplus us."

"I have heard," said Morison, "that machinery is effecting great changes in the world."

"Changes!" exclaimed Heddles, "I believe you. It will turn the world upside down, man: and high time it were. We have been snooled for half a score of centuries by fellows with half a dozen names apiece, sharp spurs, long swords, and feathers in their bonnets. Machinery will kick them off the earth to try their luck at sea, and follow them there and drown them. Oh, it's a grand thing to behold those fellows of six-and-thirty clear descents fairly nonplussed; turned topsyturvy by wood and iron only: it's like knocking one of the seven champions of Christendom down with a barnman's flail."

Morison smiled. "Well," he said, "after all, it's wood against wood; machine against machine. There's as much humanity in a check reel or a spinning jenny, as in some men of high degree."

"As much!" exclaimed Heddles; "there's mickle mair, man: ye wrang machinery in the comparison. First and foremost, machines gang on improving; men of high descent grow worse and worse. Secondly, machines work, and that long and patiently, cheered by a drop of oil; the machine called a lord never works, and one of them swallows more wine at a downsitting than would provide oil for half the machines of the island. Thirdly, a machine keeps its word, begets no children, nor leaves the world to provide for them, and never browbeats ye with big words and the threatened blow; whereas, these king-created machines break their oaths and boast on't; scatter their children over the world as the storm scatters unfledged crow-gorbs round the pines

of Dalswinton, and gallop over them when they have done. Young man, you have wronged machinery by your comparison."

"But then," replied Morison, "you will create another race of those sons of Anak, who may be disposed to make their supper on what the others spared from dinner."

"You must," said the other, "come down to Heddle hall, and have the film removed from your eyes: you are in the dark yet respecting the great philosophical and philanthropical principles about to be established. Is it not a wonderful invention which bids man sit down and repose him; while, like one of the fabled brownies, it performs the work of a hundred hands. Is it not a wonderful invention which removes, as it were, the original curse of a sweaty brow from man, and spins, and weaves, and sows, and sails, and reaps, and travels, and all for his sake, and in his service? Is it not a grand invention which levels all ranks, and clothes the naked, and feeds the hungry, and will not permit one man to be the slave of another? Young man, you must enter into the service of the firm, and in the process of time, when we have proved your merits, you may be found worthy of becoming one of the house of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company."

Morison was about to answer, when the manufacturer exclaimed, "Time is money! time is money! these ten minutes consumed in conversation would have enabled me to ascertain the level of this little idle stream here, and its capabilities in aid of our great philosophical principles. The great first cause had a meaning in everything, and I make no doubt the day will come when the sang of the bird will be found useful as well as musical; nay, when the burdocken will yield nourishment to man. But time is money—time is money." And away went the head of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, examining the stream like one seeking for grains of gold.

"This man," said Morison, "whose whole soul has entered into his machinery, must be my preceptor—from him I must learn that concentration of thought, that union of purpose, without which our efforts are made at random, and all man's toil is vain. Here, by incessant attention and industry, he will achieve a fortune, and finally, I am persuaded, prevail in the race of eminence against the titled and the far-descended. I must be up, therefore, and be doing; the sword and the gold of my vision indicate the way. My heart beats more to the sound of the trumpet than to the din of the mill wheel; and whether the intimation comes from the other world, or from this, I obey its meaning. I seem possessed by a higher and a nobler feeling; the spirit's words still sound in my ears as a music to move me to daring deeds, and in the moment of doubt and peril, she shall still

be in my sight, waving me on to fortune and glory." He rose as he spoke; and lo! the spirit to whom he alluded was either painted on the air, or stood in reality before him.

Whatever the shape of last night might have been, the form which now presented itself was that of the Lady Rose. It was evident that she regarded Morison as her brother, for she at once went up to him, took the hand which he would fain have offered, and said, "Dearest Morison! I heard your parting words at the castle, and lest you should utterly despair, I have followed you thither, to tell you that one at least with Roldan blood in her veins cares for you, and desires you to be comforted."

"Lady—Rose—sister, since your looks desire it," said Morison, wetting her hand with tears, which till then he had not shed—"that I have not despaired utterly, I must thank you—your words of gentleness on that night of music and joy—your words of admonition when you chose to personate the Ladye Spirit in this ruin last night, all are treasured—"

"Nay, now," said Rose, "you surprise me; the night of music and joy I have not—shall not forget. But the Spirit of the Chapel, last night—has she appeared to you, and were her words of hope and of glory!"

Morison looked earnestly at her: her dress was of the richest satin, and black, as suited the sad events which had befallen her house. A single fillet of the same material restrained her locks from falling in heaps on her shoulders, while on her bosom she wore a small cross richly set and of the rarest workmanship: the guileless simplicity of her looks—the calm innocence of her tone of voice, all united to baffle his scrutiny.

"Yes," said Morison, "a shape—and a fair one too—appeared to me in this place last night; and, lady, it borrowed your looks and voice, nor were its words much otherwise than your own. They were of hope and fame."

"Then," said she, "my heart is at ease: the words of the spirit are the words of fate. What she says will as surely come to pass as that the sun will rise to-morrow, and the moon to-night."

"There were tokens, too," said Morison, his original suspicion continuing. "When she vanished, she gave me a sword. I can interpret that at least—I am to seek fame and name in battle."

"Your interpretation looks like truth," said Rose; "but since you will connect me with this spirit, let me do what she seems to have left undone, enable you to equip yourself like one of our house." So saying, she put her purse, in which there were fifty pieces of gold, into his hand. "That is a sister's gift, dearest Morison, for fortune has been as yet

kinder to me than to you." And she stepped to the door threshold, as if disposed to run away, should he offer to return it.

"You do injustice to the spirit, dearest Rose," said Morison; "her gift was accompanied with gold, and that not a little. I learn from your lips the interpretation of its use: but I have no need of your bounty."

"Keep it, notwithstanding," said the young lady: "to you it will be useful, and I have no occasion for it. Farewell, your destiny calls you: be its voice obeyed: in the danger which seems to threaten you there is little to dread; a hand will be about you when you most need it: it is no spirit that says this. And now, dearest Morison, farewell—

'Hope and high fortune till we meet,
And then, what pleases Heaven!'

He would have spoken, but the Lady Rose was already gone: he ran up the turret stair, and from the summit beheld her hastening home, and often looking back, till she entered the woodland pathway to the castle and was lost to his sight.

When Morison reached home he found his mother busied in her household duties: she looked on her son; fell on his neck; kissed his cheek and brow, and turned him round as if to satisfy her eyes that he had sustained no harm. "Blessed be his name again," she said, "that kept his right arm around my fatherless boy, and brought him through trials and perils! Oh, Morison, you must not leave me in such a mood again; I have but wept and prayed, and prayed and wept, since you went away; but Scripture soothed me, my child. Did not the Most High give his only Son to the shedders of blood, and shall I be afraid of mine?"

"Mother," said Morison, "your words are ever right: I am your fatherless boy. He—I name not his name—he refused to do you justice—refused to keep his vows, and I—I disowned him! I threw the name from me of son which he fixed upon me, and said I was Mary Morison's bastard boy! and oh! mother, forgive the boast—that I would make that name as famous yet as the proud one he bore!"

Mary looked with streaming eyes on her son, and exclaimed, "God deliver thee, my child, from these wild imaginings! Alas! what hand will help thee up? honour is not won now as we see in the tale books, by a venturous blow and a bold bearing. How many fair faces have left the streets of bonnie Dumfries and the banks of Dee, and what do we behold! mothers with long mourning gowns—for their darlings have never returned!"

"Oh, but, mother," exclaimed Morison, folding her in his arms, "I shall return; I feel—I know I shall. I have seen

the Roldan spirit : and ever since I feel as if walking on the air : words once loath to come, flow on me now, and fit ones. I am without fear."

"Morison," said his mother, interrupting him, "what words are these—you have seen the Ladye Spirit of Roldan!"

"Yes," said the youth, "if such things can be seen by mortal eyes, the Ladye Spirit, as it is called, appeared unto me last night; and ever since I seem lifted from the ground; I feel capable of actions of a bold and high character, and assured—I know not how—that all I wish I shall accomplish."

"Then my child, my darling child is lost!" said the mother. "Oh! Morison, these are delusions of the devil; there are good angels, it is true, but alas! there are evil ones also; one of these, I fear, has assumed the port and hue of the spirits of heaven to fill you with presumption. Oh! my son, pride goeth before destruction; we have scripture warrant for that."

Morison showed the sword and the gold. "These," said he, "were given me by the ladye—I may not call her spirit, for she looked of this world more than of the other."

Mary's countenance brightened up; she took the sword and looked it over and over; her hands trembled so that she could not replace it in the sheath. "This weapon," she said, "is not from a spiritual armory: I know it by its short, broad blade and gold hilt, and by the scallop shell and palm leaf, and blessed cross traced upon it, to be the sword given by the great Prince Godfrey to Eustace Roldan for slaying a Saracen champion, who defied the Christians at the foot of Mount Carmel. If it was given thee by a spirit, Morison, then was it given for some great purpose; for a consecrated, a sacred weapon like that could not have been handled by an evil being. My son, your words have cheered me, and who knows but Heaven demands some mighty deed at thy hand!"

Morison kissed the crossed hilt of the sword, returned it reverently to its sheath, saying, "Sacred weapon! we shall not be separated till death divide us."

"My son," said Mary, "saw ye not when ye were at the castle the young Lady Rose? I am told she is of wondrous beauty, and that she is skilled on all instruments of music, and in many languages. Alas! poor sweet thing, she has lost her good angel in the death of Lord Thomas—that bloody Solway has mickle to answer for—and her better angel in the death of Lady Winifred. There is a mystery about her birth whilk they say will never now be cleared up, since all are dead, save one, who knows about it; and oh! his selfishness will, I fear, stife the truth: if a' tales be true Morison, she is sib to thee by the father's side."

"I have no father," exclaimed the youth, "I have no

father, I scorn the name; he who names the word to me henceforward is my enemy. I must make my deeds my father; he who would not be husband to my mother—and such a mother—ay, and such a woman, too, shall be no father to me. Were I to see him about to perish in the flames, I might pluck him out, but not as a son; did I see him sinking before his foes, and the sword in the air that was to smite him dead, I might save him, but not as a son.”

“My bairn, my bairn, make no rash promises, but compose yourself,” said Mary, “and look as if naught had happened, for here comes one who can see nothing without describing it, hear nothing without relating it, and do neither without making the very truth liesome-like. Be silent, now, and if ye were to take up a book it wad nae be amiss; but aboon all, say naught about Lord Roldan.”

CHAPTER XIV.

The Bourbon lilies wax wan as I sail,
And I strike the stars of America pale.
The glories of sea and the grandeur of land,
All can be mine for a wave of my hand.

Pirate's Song.

THE person alluded to in the conclusion of the last chapter now approached the door; she announced her coming in these words: “My faith, ye sit bien and snug here; amid all the miseries that befall us; ye would sleep with the thunder at your elbow! yere warm, and ye think all other folk are sae; yet for all that, there has na been sic a day in Glegarnock since Mirk Monday, when folk had to gang to the kirk wi’ lantern light.”

“And what’s the matter now, Nickie Neeverson!” said Mary, “what’s the matter now? there’s aye something wrang when ye have the telling of the tale; ye make mountains out of moudie tammoks.”

“Me make mountains out of mole hills!” said Nickie. “My certie, ye mole hill weel! I’m weel kenned far an near for truth telling; but at any rate I have got sic a story to tell ye—may the deil pou out the tongue that can make it waur than it is.”

“Weel than out wi’t—let’s hae’t by all means,” said Mary.

“Ou let’s hae’t, and out wi’t by all means!” said Nickie, “just as if it were an ordinary event. John Cameron says it’s the first part of the prophecy fulfilled, and Willie Adam-

and were that the blood spilt—some day next week—in Glengarnock will float Commissioner Primrose's cutter."

"But what in the name of fortune has happened, Nickie?"

"Can ye no guess now, Mary Morison, wi' a' yere wisdom;—and you, Morison, wi' a' yere lear, can ye no find out what has occurred! What's the use of education then? Oh, mither wit's the best of all wit!"

"I can tell you," replied Morison; "for whatever happens in the world is written down in this book: ay, here it is." He opened his Greek Homer and pretended to read: "Saturday a day of wonders, Glengarnock flow shall burst from its place, and flooding the corn fields, frighten the fowls of heaven, the four-footed beasts of the earth, and the women thereof; and sweeping folds and flocks before it, darken the very waters of the ocean."

"God have a care on us, but this learning is a fearful thing!" exclaimed Nickie. "Glengarnock flow has ta'en to the sea as is there set down; and the partridges flew, and the hares fled, and the Solway, instead of being white with foam, is as black as ink. I saw it wi' my ain een, else I wadna believe it."

"His hand be about us a'!" said Mary. "And is it really sae then?"

"Sae then!" exclaimed Nickie; "it's a thing that I both heard and saw. The moss—it's twa mile long, and ae mile braid—swallowed up like a barm scone, and first gae a hyke this way, syne a hyke that way, then a rift and a rair, and away it came ten miles to the hour, sax feet deep abreast, and a mile braid: some are riding, some are rinning—I never saw sic a sight! It's the fulfilling of an auld prophecy too."

"An auld prophecy, woman!" said Mary; "those that look to fweets, fweets follow. Oh the bonny gowany holms it will hae laid desolate, and the fair corn fields it will have rendered barren; and then the haunts of the twin hares and the speckled laverocks."

"Ou ay," said Nickie, chiming in; "and the clocken hens wi' their birds, and the four-footed bestial and the twa-footed. I saw Dick Bell, of the Wylie-hole, carried away wi' his feet foremost; he made a handsome corse"

"Help us too, woman, and how happened it? he was a comely lad and a strang."

"Atweel was he," said Nickie; "but he tint his life in an honourable cause—he was attempting to save the life of his father."

"This is a fearful day indeed!" cried Mary; "and was auld Wylie-hole saved then?"

"Deed no, he was e'en drowned—that's to say smooored in the peat broo; but he was aye a reckless man, and owre venturesome: he might hae loot yonger folk try to save his

wife—but meir skaith has happened in a May shower than the loss of Leezie Jardine."

"What a sad dispensation!" exclaimed Mary; "and wherefore did the gude wife stay behind to be put in peril—I never heard sic a tale."

"Ou just frae a foolish saftness of heart. Jeanie Rabson of Howeboddom was there about her woo' and her butter it's like, and when some ane tauld her o' a sad thing that had happened, or wad happen Morison there, what did she do, think ye? pappit clean owre in a faint, and the gude wife wadna forsake a guest in sic a strait. But guide us, where's the laddie rinnin? he's aff like a bleeze o' tow: stop, Morison—ay, sae I may! Aweel the rin will do him ne harm; but had he bidden, I could have tauld him how a' I have named were saved."

Mary, who had put on her bonnet when she heard Jeanie Rabson named, now laid it aside. "Ye hae put a stound to my poor boy's heart, wi' yere lies and your folly," she said; "but we might hae kenned you."

"Houts, woman," said Nickie, "I tauld ye nae falsehood: only Morison wadna wait till he heard out the tale. It was grand to behold him take the bent; but gude right had he to rin: it's weel his part: he's to be laird of Howeboddom nae less! But Jeanie will make a capital wife; only she's inclined to be dumpy, and's a year or sae owre auld."

"Ye wad provoke a saunt, Nickie," said Mary: "my bairn will neither be laird of Howeboddom, nor husband of Jeanie Rabson."

"Aweel," replied the other, "wilfu' fowk maun hae their way; but deil ma care! Jamie Rabson can find heirs enow for his bit bonnie lairdship; and as for Jeanie, she's neither sae ugly nor sae auld that she need be scorned—a Rabson's as gude as a Morison ony day in a' the year!"

"Ay, or as a Neevison either," said Mary; "but there's nae scorn meant. Jeanie Rabson and I understand ane anither quite weel, and sae let the matter drap."

"Ye maybe understand the laird too," said Nickie. "I wonder wherefore he makes sae mony jaunts to the top of Hunkerdodie hill, and sits glowering for hours towards the Elfin-glen: he'll impair his sight, Mary, woman, and that will be seen."

When Morison reached the gorge of the glen, the sun was setting, and his all but level beams were touching tree top and tower, and dancing on the dimpling tide, for there was little or no wind. The whole glen, from the seashore to the morass, was moving with people, separated into two distinct portions of horse and foot, resembling armies, between whom rolled a black and impassable flood, on the top of which trees, bushes, hay, shealings, and sheep were borne along. From the bosom of the morass gushed this dark and

destroying stream; nor did the sable fountains which supplied it seem at all exhausted: they bubbled up and boiled, and it looked as if the waters, barrelled up in the centre of the earth, were suddenly loosened, and about to establish a river of a new colour and character.

Morison soon ascertained that Jeanie Rabson was safe, and at Howeboddam, a place to which the news of this disaster had not perhaps penetrated; that Dick Bell of the Wylie-hole, had escaped from the deluge by speed of foot; and that, in short, though many were frightened few were injured, though a space of a quarter of a mile in breadth, and three miles in length, reaching from the morass to the sea, was inundated in some places six feet deep by this unlooked-for irruption. The most unmoved of the numerous spectators was Hugh Heddles, Esq.: he gazed at the flood; he took some of it up in his hands; he smelt it and tasted it, and walked up and down, exclaiming "Wonderful! wonderful! a new power! a new power! wonderful! wonderful!" Fixing his eyes on Morison, he cried, "Are you willing to work in the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company? make up your mind: the vacancy must be filled up. The place shall be opened to competition. Six applications have already been made: we cannot wait, young man." Then he changed his tone, and shouted, "A new power! a new power! Fire, water, and wind were, till now, king, lords, and commons of science and philosophy. A new power has appeared: if you put it into a pot it will boil; into a fire it will burn; and if you lay it on the land it will deepen the soil. A new power! a new power!"

Though the sun had set, the light of the stars was sufficient to show the anxious faces which thronged the margin of this sable stream; men tied torches to the trees, some kindled fires on the shore, and where the lights failed to indicate the limit of the inundation, the eager tongues of the multitude announced it. As the night advanced the interest of the scene was augmented, for the moon rose broad and bright; the tide came with the moon, and heaved up the moving mass; the bay was become part land as well as water; heather was blooming above quicksands, and tedded hay where pellocks wallowed.

"Hilloah!" roared Davie Gellock, as he saw this strange sight; "Glengarnock moss is possessed wi' the deil, and has ta'en to the sea like the swine in Scripture."

"I'll tell you what, my handy lad," said a fellow in a tarry jacket, with trousers as wide as petticoats about the ankles, "I have given a landlubber a slash for softer words than these; reef in, reef in."

"And I," said Davie, "have given a cleverer fellow than ever stood on your shanks the breadth of his back for looks no half sae sulky as yours. Ye'll be ane of Dick Corabane's

scape rape's; but now I think on't, the Wildfire left the bay this morning."

"The Wildfire's a witch," said the seaman, "and is in the bay when she seems to be out of it; and if I'm a scape rape, I'm flogged if you escape a rope's end if you come athwart me on salt water, my lad."

"We'll maybe meet soon, then," said Davie, not at all daunted by the menacing words of the maritime desperado; "for Morison Roldan, and mysel, and ane or twa mae, mean to take a boat and look at the contention of the powers of light and darkness; the black peat moss with the white sea foam."

The mariner, who seemed to have heard something of importance, hastened from the crowd, and was soon lost among the rocks which fenced the headland of the bay.

Davie made his boat ready, two comrades of the sheepfold and the barn joined him, but as the latter were about to push off, the former cried out, "Avast! I wadna gie a single bodle for the finest sight the sun or moon affords, unless I had Morison wi' me, to tell me a' about it, and say what is gude and what is bad; what is bonnie, and what is sublime; these are his ain words, lads—but here he comes, and in gude time. Now, Morison, come and behold the worry atween the tide and the flow moss; I hear the sough of the encounter at the back of Robin-rigg! That's right, jump in, I tauld them that I couldna enjoy it without you."

As Morison stepped in, the boat was thrust from the shore, and away she went with a start, moved by the oar and sail, and aided by the stream of the uniting brooks, which indicated by a line of foam the course they took in the tide, which was now receding.

"I see men eying us from the headland," said Morison, as they shot past the caverns where he once or twice had parleyed with Captain Corsbane, "and one has flashed his pistol as a signal: let us keep from the shore."

They pushed away seaward, and were soon nigh the scene where the contest had lately been waged between the lava moss and the tide; but the waters were now retiring, and about to scatter their burden over the shores of England, Ireland, and Scotland. While Morison and Davie quietly drifted away, their talk was of this irruption and the consternation which it had caused. "It first spouted," said Davie, "as high as the kirk steeple into the air, and fell down in black rainbows; then it gullered bellyflaught out: first it ran owre Dick Bell's hayricks; then it galloped down twa of his horses; next it walked in at the easing of his house, and finally it took to the sea; but it has met with its master now."

"And so have you, my handy lad," exclaimed a rough voice from a boat which, till now unobserved, shot suddenly

athwart them. "Room, there, I'm flogged if we give way to such lubbers!"

Ere Morison or Davie—for their comrades were neither skilful nor courageous—could veer, the boats encountered, and all four were shocked suddenly into the water. Morison was an expert swimmer, and calling to his companions, turned his face to land, which lay at a short distance; but their assailants had no wish that two of them at least should reach Scottish ground so soon: they followed, and stunning Morison with a stroke of an oar, took him into the boat; on which Davie turned round, and seizing the leg of one of the seamen and the boat at the same moment, scrambled in, but not till he had received a blow from the other which threw him across the knees of Morison.

"I say, Dempster, that was hard and shabby too," growled one of the seamen, of whom there were six.

"I meant it to be both," said Dempster: "it is part payment for the slack jaw I stood from the lubber to-night."

"I'll allow no such payments to be made without consulting me," retorted the other. "Strike a poor fellow after attempting to drown him! what next? If you are Tom Dempster, I'm Jack Martin, my boy!"

"Pull away," cried another seaman, "the other fellows have reached the shore: see they shake the sea water from their rags and run: we shall have the land sharks down on us, and be hung like strings of onions for kidnappers and pirates—pull away!"

His companions seemed to think there was sense in this, and pulled with such good will that they soon reached the Wildfire, which, with sails set, was cruising about, and carried—not without remonstrance—Morison and Davie on board.

"Yo ho! what have we got here, Dempster?" growled Captain Corsbane; "didn't I tell you to bring no more land-lubbers on board the Wildfire! my complement's full, haven't room to stow away a marlinspike; must toss them overboard, that's the way I serve all useless stores."

Dempster went and whispered in Corsbane's ear.

"Ah, ah! you have done it then, caught him fairly; hooked the shark: ay, ay, I remember now; but if ye had pitched him into Davy's locker 'twould been just as well; bring him to me, I must have some talk with him."

When Morison was marched up he found this maritime worthy seated on the carriage of a carronade, a couple of empty wine bottles rolled about at his feet; a third, half emptied, sat in a small basket beside him; the good wine had done its duty, and Captain Corsbane, although his voyage could scarcely be called begun, seemed full half seas over. "Well, my Trojan," said the captain, "so you have fallen in love with the sea since I saw you last. The ocean's a sweet

mistress, by God! has a bonny bosom of her own, ay, and—*but* come, sit you down, sit you down: a cup here, Dempster; the boy must pledge me to old Daddy Neptune. There, open your mouth, put the wine to it, raise your little finger—*bravo, damme!* Dempster, this fellow has spunk and smeddum in him, as you say.”

“Yes,” growled Dempster, “but there’s no need to tell the lubber of it; he should have had his belly full of sea-water for me had it not been for Jack Martin, who saved him and another fellow that I owe a blow of a stretcher to yet.”

Captain Corsbane said gravely, “Jack Martin was right; Jack will be singing among the cherubs when you are damned, Dempster, and the devils areighting their dousps wi’ you. Mercy, I say, Dempster, mercy is a beauty; my creed is, point the guns, strike wi’ the cutlass, thrust wi’ the pike, board, plunder, spare nothing, and seize all; but, oh, be merciful. Now, Morison, where’s your comrade, has he had a dip in Tom Dempster’s waters of mercy? bring him up. Ha! an old acquaintance, and dripping like a mermaid, too; come, crush this cup of wine; you are a rough cub, and the good claret will not be wasted on you; it will put something classical into you; there!—gape, raise the cup, lift your little finger: down it goes! *Damme!* I have taught hundreds in my day to drink, and hope to teach hundreds more. But stay, one word: what the devil has brought you both here? I didn’t send for you, did I?”

Morison spoke first; he felt it prudent to conceal all that he knew respecting the agreement between the baron and the captain, and though he had become, when he least looked for it, a victim, he resolved to bow to circumstances, speak the corsair fair, and never hint suspicion, but seem ignorance itself. He was not without a belief, too, that the swaggering and reeling behaviour and talk of that worthy arose less from drink than design, and was put on for the purpose of sounding him, and mastering his real sentiments: perhaps to screen himself from the consequences of the adventure; for there were sloops of war on the coast, who already suspected him of being both pirate and kidnapper.

“I came here with no good will of my own,” said Morison, in answer to the captain’s question; “we were out with a boat in the bay, and were run down by your men from design, or accident, I swam towards land, but Dempster stunned me with a stroke of his oar—you know the rest.”

“The same story will do for me with this difference,” said Davie, “I seized Dempster with ae hand and the boat with the other, and got in. But, what d’ye think? the dour spitefu’ sumpghied me a blow that knocked the senses for some time out o’ me. But oh, my lad, when I catch you where cocks and hens gang, if I dinna make ye wish ye were in the creels of tinkler Marshal’s ass, where ye were nurtured, may

"I be made bait for shark hooks!" Davie and Dempster exchanged angry glances—the majority of the crew, who might amount to five-and-thirty, seemed pleased at the notion of a squabble, and that the latter had found one to match him with tongue as well as hand.

"I see how it is, my lads," said Corsbane, "you ran foul of my boat, and my crew, who were, I believe, a little hearty, amused themselves with you in the water; there was no harm meant, not a bit of it; they were alarmed lest you should drown, and saved you, and brought you on board; so that's all right; but my saucy Wildfire is under way—cannot shorten sail and send a boat ashore: no, damme! not for the princess royal herself; but we shall put you on board the first vessel we meet standing for your bay—you can't call that uncivil."

While Corsbane was speaking, a sudden breeze sprung up, which filling the sails of the Wildfire, wafted her on her voyage, with a rapidity which Morison had no conception of before.

"Wildfire," said Davie, "a gaye gude name, but Wildsow would be better—hear how she gaes snorking through the water."

"Wildsow!" said Dempster, "and we sailors are the deevils with which she is possessed—mean you so? I mind your speech in the bay, my fine lad, and will dust your jacket for it soon; there's a brow time coming."

"Ye had better not try it just now," said Davie, "for it wad puzzle ye to knock the dust out of my jacket, seeing it is wet—but if ye like ye may try—I want something to warm me—mony a time I have warmed mysel at your grandfather's fire, when he made horn spoons."

"May I eat a roast jackass stuffed with armed marines," exclaimed Jack Martin, "but I like this fellow—ay, and he shall have fair play too!—we have had too much of the dish called Dempster, of late."

This growing quarrel was not unobserved by the captain; but such was the license in which he lived, that he found it necessary to yield now and then to his men's humours in small things, so that he might better manage them in the larger; nor was it unobserved of Morison, who took an opportunity of whispering to Davie to let the matter drop and be quiet.

"Drap," said Davie, aloud, buttoning his jacket, and drawing an old hat deeper on his brows. "D'ye think that I am afraid o' Tam Dempster?—mony a mouthfu' his mother's ass has poud o' my mother's corn, and mony a gude hen he has stown frae our hen bawks."

Dempster could endure this no longer, but running up struck out right and left at his adversary, saying, "Take that—and that!"

Davie warded these, and twenty more with the most patient dexterity, and though he was unable to elude all, he had thrown none of his wind away when his antagonist had spent much of his.

"The one's all fire and the other's all ice," exclaimed one of the seamen.

"If that fellow could but strike as well as he can stand," said Jack Martin, "he'd take the wind out of the tinker's bellows in the turning of a horn spoon."

These words were not lost on the cautious and cunning Davie: he became at once all life and energy; he pressed on his adversary, and poured in his blows thick and heavy. Dempster, after receiving two or three falls, rose at last with difficulty, and wiping the blood from mouth and nose, said, "We shall try this over again with cold steel," and so the contest ceased.

"You're a fine lad," said Martin, "so don't be afraid of Dempster and his cold steel—he winks when he holds out iron."

"Me!" said Davie, "I care neither for airn or steel in his hands. I was something seared for him at first, till I fand out wha he was: there's ne'er a son of Rob the tinker randie shall frighten me. But hae ye ony rapes to pou at, or a wee turn o' wark to do that I can put to my hand and keep myself warm? The bit brulzie has done me gude, for d'ye ken, I am no accustomed to saut water."

"This is a cock of the right sort," said Martin. "Come below, my lad, and bring Morison with you. I shall give you a sook of the monkey, and allow you to dry yourselves at the fire—you can't call that ill usage!"

When the two companions in captivity were alone, "What tempted ye, Davie," said Morison, in a whisper, "to commence brawling at such a time as this, and with such unhallowed vagabonds to?"

Davie looked all round, and listened, without seeming to listen, and answered in a tone scarce audible even to his friend. "'Deed ye see, Morison, I had sundry reasons: first, there's a sort of a family grudge atween the Gellocks and the Dempsters: secondly, I wanted to win gude will to us by seeming a deil-ma-care sort of chap; and thirdly, I wanted to make them believe that its a' ane to Davie whare the wind blows him. And wherefore no?" he said, in a more audible tone; "what in the deil's name, that I should say sae, could hae happened luckier? We wanted to push our fortunes in the warld, and kenned na how to begin, when in comes this rum customer Dick Corsbane, wha can be fou or sober whenever it suits him, and whirle us off to do ourselves a gude turn whether we will or no. Naught better could hae happened; God, they canna gang wrang wi' me; I'm like a grain of thistle seed; the duds that's about me's the balloon

ed down to waft the body over the warld; and hale fresh sound seed, ye ken, will take root in any place."

"Davie," said Morison, "I thought I understood you once, but now you are a mystery; the chart of your understanding, instead of a clear defined matter, is become a blot."

"A chart," said Davie, "I'll show ye the chart that I want to sail by." He took up a bit of charred wood, and proceeding to draw lines on the cabin floor, said, "Look now, canna ye look! Here's Jamaica; then this is Guadaloupe; and that is Tobago; I have scarce room for Hispaniola." While running on this rate, he wrote, "We are watched by ear and eye; ware hawk!" "Weel now," he said, when he saw that Morison took the warning, "I say, Hispaniola for my siller; od! there will be prime fun in the cruise; but I see yere sulky, and diana like it?"

"You are right," said Morison; "no change which comes can be much worse for two, who are already the sport of fortune; and, as you say, this adventure may be the best thing that could have happened us."

"Ye make me blythe to hear ye," said Davie; "but losh! what a hullabalou your mother and my mother will make about us. The tane will do the bass and the tither the tenour in this new ballad of wo, and there winna be the like o' Davie, nor the like o' Morison, in all the wide annals o' misfortune. Oh, what fine lads we were! we never robbed orchards, sodded up lums, or made hoof marks of the horned deil in the garden plots of Domainie Milligan, which made him cry out Sathanas! not we indeed—nor was it us—but what's the matter wi'?"

Morison observed that they were watched, and felt his anger swelling, an anger which he knew would be madness to indulge in, but which he strove in vain to conceal. Davie, he perceived, was quite at his ease, and he could not help wondering at the natural-like carelessness which he assumed, and the restraint put on a disposition open and talkative. This rustic shrewdness he saw would avail them something, but for himself he thought the wisest way, since he had not worn an air of satisfaction at first, would be to become a convert by degrees. "I wish," said Morison, "I were like you, Davie, and could meet whatever fortune came with gayety of heart, and with a belief that it was, as Nanse Halberson says, decreed for us before the first sark was put over our heads."

"Whisht, oh, whisht!" said Davie, "dinna mention her name while we are sailing on sant water; this is her ain element, man; I wadna wonder if she were swimming in one of her invisible boats alongside: she just delights in mischief. I saw her ae moonlight night take auld Fluke Faulder's fish-creeel of a boat, and spin it round at the back of the Robin-rigg, like a tetotuni, and then whew! away she pushed it

owre to Allanbay; I wish ye had but heard her unearthly yelloch, and seen how a' folk stared."

This conversation puzzled the listeners, who could see and hear all that passed. Davie's quarrel with Dempater was the first thing that induced a belief that he was as careless as the wind; his charcoal chart on the cabin floor caused a shaking of the head, it seemed mystical; but that was redeemed again by his allusion to the alarm of his mother, and the naïve admission of the boyish achievements of Morison and himself. But when the name of Nanse Halberson was introduced, each of the spies listened and looked on Davie with an intensesness equal almost to looking through him. It was here that Davie triumphed; on other matters, a something in his look and tone seemed put on, but when he spoke of the witch, his words and looks were natural and real; the two listeners—and one of them was Corsbane himself—gave up their scrutiny, and retired satisfied, saying, "All's right, damme!"

Davie on this said to Morison, "Give me your pistols, and give me what gold you have about you; for I think I hae baffled them sae that they winna think of searching me. But you! your stiffness of nature—the Roldan blude, belike—winna let ye stoop to dissimulation sufficient to save ye, and its likely they will rype ye fore and aft, as they say; but I'll stick by ye, deil a doubt o't. Ay, now, that's right and trusting of ye. There, the good weapons and the gowd are disposed of. I am glad of the first, for I ken yere nature: ye would be for trying the strong hand, thinking, because mastery maws the meadow, mastery will do here; but cunning's the thing, lad, and wit excels gowd. If nae better may be, I'se e'en make myself known to Johnnie Martin—he's my second cousin by the uncle's side—and put our cause in his hands. He's a better sailor, without half the slack jaw of Corsbane; and there's a dozen hands here that will abide by him like burrs; and mair nor that, though nae the thing he should be, he winna see me wranged, or damme! then, as the captain says."

On the third or fourth morning after this adventure, Captain Corsbane, who had been busy above deck and below, made his appearance. His manner was unembarrassed and frank. "Aha!" he said, "my young friends; mayhap you thought I had forgot you, but I hadn't, though: we have hailed two homewards; one sailed shy, damme! and t'other seemed disposed to try the weight of her nine-pounders on us. My pretty little Wildfire frightens these gulls as a sparrowhawk scares chickens."

"D'ye ken, Captain Corsbane," said Davie, "that I have nae wish but to sail to the far end wi' ye. I have lang desired to see a glimpse of the world, and it will be just as much to my satisfaction, now, if nae ship chances to cast up.

I'm the lad, too, that can handle a rape, and do other wee etcaeteras, besides settling the hash o' the sumph Dempster; I wonder what's become o' his cauld steel!"

"I'll tell you what, my friend," said Captain Corsbane, "I like your spirit; but damme! don't carry it too far; Dempster is no sumph; and he cares for neither fire nor steel."

"And I care for neither fire nor steel, nor wind nor water, nor Tam Dempster neither," said Davie; "and if ye want me to be one of your handy lads, ye maun let us settle the bit tiff aween us, and then we'll work like brithers."

The captain took stride after stride up and down the cabin, and seemed to be revolving something in his mind. "Why, my lads," said he, "I'll not deny that our accidental meeting in the bay was to me a pleasing chance. It's seldom, nowadays, that I can find spirits of the proper stamp; we shall have fine goings on soon on the deep; and then fellows who have blood in their veins, and not moss water, will thrive and grow, damme! into little kings."

"I am glad to hear of that same," said Davie; "I have aye thought if I did ony gude, it wad be on the deep sea. I didna prosper on land."

"Why, that's right, my lad—you please me. Gad! a successful voyage or so will enable you to tar down the mainsail with six pound weight of gold about your neck, and a couple of satin waistcoats on; and then, when we reach port, why pleasure will come as strong as a nor'wester. There was Jack Planchernafl, of the Wildfire, he paraded up the streets of Kingston with half a dozen fiddlers before him, and six score dancing damsels—white, brown, and black, damme! Jack didn't stand on colours—and then, whenever he came to a turn of the street, away flew a shower of dollars!"

"Weel, the like o' that!" cried Davie; "dod! but Jack was a soul of a boy! I should like to get acquainted wi' him—have a shake of his paw, as the saying is."

The captain smiled, and muttered, "Why, that mayn't well be just now. Jack—he always called himself unlucky Jack—got into a scrape somehow with the government; the government handed him over to the law; the law put its rough riband round his neck; and there was an end of one of the heartiest dogs that ever breasted brine. But what's this young fellow glowing at, damme! I have some doubts of you, brother;" and he turned his looks on Morison.

"He disna heed or hear a word ye say," said the intrepid Davie; "for this half hour past he has been looking at the louping of the dolphins; at the diving of Mother Carey's chickens, and at the walloring o' the waters: he'll make a grand ballad about it."

"Oh, an he be a ballad maker," said the captain, "I shall

make him useful; we want sometimes in a calm, and nothing doing, to have our spirits stirred a bit."

"An he's just the lad that can do it, then; did you never hear his pirate's sang? It's a tickler—

" 'Oh maiden, come off to the Indies with me,
Ye shall reign and rule on the sunny sea;
My ship is a palace, my deck is a throne,
And all shall be thine that the sun shines on.' "

"Damme!" said the captain, "the fellow can put some powder in his verse; that's none of your sweetmilk dittys; is there more on't?"

"Mickle mair, and far better, too," said Davie; "I'se repeat it all; for I see he's in one of his grand moods, and heeds us nae mair than if we were twa capstanes."

" 'Thy shining locks would buy Java's isle;
All India's wealth is not worth thy smile;
Let kings rule earth by a right divine,
Thou shalt be queen of the fathomless brine.

A gallant ship and a boundless sea,
A piping wind, and the foe on our lee;
My pennant streaming so gay from the mast,
My cannon flashing all bright and fast.

The Bourbon lilies wax wan as I sail;
And I strike the stars of America pale;
The glories of sea, and the grandeur of land,
All shall be thine for a wave of thy hand.' "

"And did Morison," exclaimed Corsbane, "write that? He's the lad that can double-shot his verse. 'My cannon flashing all bright and fast' is prime; 'the stars of America' is a hit; but the 'Bourbon lilies' won't pass; cause why—there are no Bourbon lilies now, my lads; the lily is no longer a royal flower. Oh, damme! you hear that, do you? I thought you were asleep. But the tricolour is hoisted in its stead: a sign and witter from the people that they'll be humbugged no longer with coronets and crowns. We shall have rare doings on the sea soon, my lads—we shall."

CHAPTER XV.

Oh where's he gone whom I love best,
 And has left me here to sigh and mourn?
 It's I will range the wild world over,
 Till once I see if he return.

Scottish Song.

MEANWHILE the cry arose in Glengarnock that Morison Roldan was lost and gone; the two rustics that escaped related their encounter with the pirate's boat, and how they had to swim for their lives; but one averred that he saw Morison sunk in the tide by the blow of an oar, while the other declared that he saw him taken into the boat. Both, however, agreed that the Wildfire was cruising at hand, and all who heard their tale concurred in charging Captain Corbane with the outrage. Nor did they stop there. "I ken my ain ken," said a fisherman belonging to the bay. "It was na for naught that the captain and the baron up by yonder held meetings privily—they thought I didna see them—oh and alas!—this is a sad warld when we are cruel to our ain flesh and blude."

"Alas!" cried a damsel, on whose heart the looks of Morison had, it appears, made some impression—"alas, poor lad! he has been made a sacrifice, because his fair face and olever head were a reproach to Lord Roldan; he didna like that one so superior to himself should abide in the land—and Mattie Anderson, too, to slight him! Dishclout of a creature, it set her weel to turn up her short nose at sic a lad as Morison!"

An old dame now added her voice to the song of lamentation. "And wherefore, hinnies, have we been deprived of our bonniest and our best—for I was nane of them that thought the lad the waur for being born on the wrang side of the blanket—and wherefore, I say, are we robbed of our bonniest and our best? For naught but to pleasure the een of a grand lady who is coming frae the south to be wed to Lord Roldan. She mauna see the poor bastard bairn in his coat of hamespun. My certie, she'll never produce aught that will make us forget him."

"Deil be in him, that I should say sae," exclaimed a second dame, "to slight sic a quean as Mary Morison. When will the bonniest Vane in the south, for that's her name, equal the looks of the bonnie lass of the Elfin-burn?"

"And deil be in ye a'," cried Nickie Neevison, "what a work's this about a boy that came amang us contrair to the

consent of the kirk, and no a sigh nor a sab a' the while for poor winsome Davie Gellock; but it's aye the way, the maist wark's aye made about the warst—Davie was a pattern of a bairn."

The house of Mary Morison stood, as we have elsewhere intimated, at a distance from the bay; she waited on the night that her son disappeared till very late; she listened to every sound, and heard his voice or his coming steps in every dash of the brook and every breath of wind that shook her door or swept over the trees. At length sleep overpowered her. In her sleep the image of her son was presented to her, and something like actual events passed before her face; she saw him sailing in the bay, with the moonlight above and the waters glimmering below—next she saw him borne away by rovers, and imagined she filled the air with her shriekings. A hand now rudely shook her by the shoulder, while the harsh voice of Nickie Neevison exclaimed, "Waken!—wad ye lie sleeping now, when a' is lost that's worth losing? has na the braw moss of Glengarnock ta'en to the sea, and what we will do for peats is past my comprehension; and mair—has nae poor Morison and Davie Gellock been swallowed up in the flood! Oh that wearifu' tide! Mony's the fair form it feasts on."

Mary sprang up, exclaiming, "My bairn—my bonnie bairn—what about him?"

"Deed, that's mair nor I can tell," answered the comforter. "I say drowned, drowned; but Jenny Jamieson's Jock and Will Thorburn aver that he is seized by that smuggler and pirate Dick Corsbane, and borne awa to the West Indies. But here are others who maybe can tell ye mair anent it."

The sound of feet, at something between a walk and a run, was now heard; and in a moment James Rabson of Howeboddum, and his sister Jeanie, were in the house. "Oh, Mary, my poor Mary!" exclaimed the former, "this is an afflicting matter! Alas, alas! I thought your sorrows were nigh an end, and that a' byganes would be forgotten in the growing talents of our poor Morison. Oh, but I had mony misgivings! But we shall arm a ship, and we shall sail awa in quest of him. Oh! an I had but that cursed captain by the craig, I should ken wherefore he meddled wi' the bairn."

Mary, who had lain down without undressing, rose; but she rose only to fall on her knees. James Rabson and Jeanie, and even the intractable Nickie, retired a few steps, and were silent while she addressed herself to the throne of grace. On rising, she looked around her composed; but her hands were tremulous, her voice quivered, and her face was as colourless as marble.

"Mary—Mary Morison," said Jeanie Rabson, "my first

and last word is, trust in God; his ways are wonderful! We—that is, James there, and myself—have been busied the hale night, examining one and speiring at another, and the result is—Mary, trust in God. There's nae doubt that Morison is living, and in the body; he was capsized in his boat, and captured by that smuggler and pirate, Captain Corsbane. I never bought ony of his silks or his lace since the day I saw drops of blude on one of his bales."

"Oh, Jeanie," said Mary, "and what will they do wi' my bairn—but why need I ask that? they will kill him; for his spirit was great, and he will resist. Oh, Morison—Morison! and have all my hopes and my dreams come to this?"

"Ance mair, Mary, I say," interposed Jeanie, "trust in God. Morison will be ta'en to the West Indies, and it's likely he will be sold to some planter or anither; but, then, he's no like an ordinary or mere mortal; he will find favour in the eyes of his taskmasters, even as Joseph did, and will become great, Mary, and return to this land; and then see what will be the confusion of them that kidnapped and sold him to bondage!"

"Them that kidnapped him!" exclaimed the laird of Howeboddum; "and wherefore no demand justice or seek vengeance now! Captain Corsbane is out of our reach for the present; but Roldan Castle is still standing; its lord is still living; and here's the man that will exact an account from him of the poor bairn whom he has doomed to destruction."

"James," said his sister, "compose yourself: we but jalouse that Lord Roldan was art and part in this."

"Art and part!" sobbed Mary Morison; "and has the arrow came to my side from that quarter? Oh God! Jeanie—Jeanie Rabson, I canna do as you bid me—I canna trust—"

Jeanie placed her hand on her mouth. "Let not such a word escape your lips, woman! to have but thought it is a heinous sin. Oh, what are we but worms! And shall we dare to doubt of God's goodness, and refuse to trust in him? When we cease to trust in God, we have half turned us round to the devil. No on your knees yet!—oh woman!"

Mary ran into Morison's little chamber, knelt for a few minutes' space, and returned strengthened and comforted.

Presently the sound and buzz of many tongues and many feet were heard in the glen. A crowd of men and women approached the cottage, and two of their number, Willie Cowan and Tom Edmonstone, came and said that the Rising Sun had just arrived in the bay with the intelligence that Captain Corsbane in the Wildfire was on his way to the West Indies. They had met him on the coast, and knowing him to be smuggler and pirate, desired to have a brush with him; but the excellence of his seamanship, and the swiftness of his sailing, carried him out of their reach. Corsbane,

they added, was as much dreaded, as he was well known, in the West Indies; he had a noble estate in Hispaniola, for he had French blood as well as Scotch in his veins, and kept a splendid house, and even a harem, with numerous slaves. They believed that his course was wellnigh run; he was marked out by the British ships of war, and but for the civil dissensions in France, which extended to Hispaniola, he would have been seized and condemned long ago; for several of his comrades hung blackening in the sun among the West India isles.

Mary drew something like comfort from this intelligence; and turning to Jeanie Rabson, said, "Oh Jeanie—my ain Jeanie, you are ever right; I trust in God."

Nickie Neevison now stepped forward and said, "Wherefore all this moan about ane, when it's weel kenned there are twa; and wherefore come ye here with guns and staves? D'ye think that this array of war will bring back bonnie Merison Roldan to his mither's bosom?"

"Fool woman!" said Edmonstone, "will ye never learn the art of hauding yere tongue! If you hadna tauld poor Morison that the Wildfire had left the bay, he wad ha'e been on his guard."

"There now," said the laird of Howeboddum, "the thing is growing plainer and plainer; and I ken o' ane wha saw the captain and the baron talking late the night before; so lay that and that together, and couple a' with the circumstance that my lord is about to be married to the grand southron Lady Vane, and ye'll see why our poor bairn has been kidnapped."

These latter words went like a knife to the heart of Mary; it is true that she had long ceased to nourish any hopes connected with the hand of Lord Roldan, while his late conversation with her son put it beyond all doubt that he had no desire to do her justice; yet while he was unmarried there was the chance which repentance might bring about. She grew exceedingly pale, and said to herself, "Oh God! what next!—what next!"

It would have been well for her, perhaps, had she fainted; the vigour of her mind, and this heaping up of misfortunes, had a contest. Not a tear came; her eyes wandered wildly around; her hands clutched repeatedly at the empty air; she gasped as if the words to which she wished to give utterance were choking her, and then said, in a low, hurried, smothering tone, "Is Lord Roldan there?—is Lord Roldan there? Stand out between me and the light, and let me see him." She held out her hands, saying, "Give me my son—give me my son. Turn me out of house and home; make the grass my bed, and the sky my covering, and the blind-worm and grasshoppers my bedfellows, but, oh! give me my son. You have him not, say you? Oh yes, you have him

—I will worship you," she said, falling on her knees, "I will worship you—I will place you between God and me, if you will but give me my son. We will go from you as far as the sun has land to shine on—as far as the wind has space to breathe in—as far as water flows, birds sing, and flowers yield savour, if you will give me my son."

"Oh, Jeanie—Jeanie Rabson," said the laird, "canna ye bring her back to reason—I'll give the half of Howeboddom to whoever can restore her—if she disna come again, I ken what I'll do," and he clenched his teeth, and muttered something about "heart's blude."

"We are a' gaun mad together," said Jeanie, in a low tone, loosening Mary's stays; on opening her bosom a platted-tress of long shining hair, tied with blue riband, dropped out: Jeanie thrust it out of sight.

Mary felt about her neck for the tress of hair with both her hands. "Ay, take it back, my lord—take it back—you are right: what have I to do with such tokens! Now will ye give me my son? Oh the time has been when ye were the suer and I was the sued. The moon on Glengarnock hill, do you mind how brightly she shone! the stars, too, looked through the garlands of our trysting bower, and I thought they saw us. You vowed and I listened; you swore, and what could I do but believe! I had not then learned that falsehood was on earth; but, oh, too soon you taught me that lies were common, and false oaths too. Oh give me back my son, since you cannot give me my fair name." She seemed to expect an answer, but receiving none, rose suddenly up, dropped her hands, and murmuring out, "Alas, where am I, and where am I wandering!" sank into the arms of Jeanie Rabson, and fainted away. "God be praised!" said Jeanie, "I ken how to deal with her now: open door—open window. James, strike on her palms, and, oh! do it softly: the caulddest water, Nickie, woman, that's owre warm—that will do: fan her now, fan her; stand out of the door there; she's coming to herself. Now a' leave the room save Nickie and me; begone with you: did ye never see a woman in a fainting-fit before?"

The laird of Howeboddom went out and addressed the crowd who had assembled to hear the news of Morison. "Men," said James, "I have but little to say: Mary, God help her, is just falling out of ae fainting-fit into anither: Morison, poor lad, is carried off—kidnapped, I should hae said—and it's believed that his ain father kens owre meikle about it: sae if ye'll a' slip hame till I gang up to the castle and speak to my lord, I'll meet ye at Howeboddom at e'en, and tell ye what speirings I get."

The peasants looked one at another, "Conscience, man," exclaimed Willie Cowan, "the half of a' that ye learn there winna be meikle: what am I here for, think ye; and d'ye

think my Queen Anne has naught but a snuff o' powder in her!" He brandished his gun as he spoke, and added, "I'll mak' twa; mak' the third wha likes."

"We'll a' gang up," exclaimed a hundred voices; "and if we canna get a clear account of the dear lad, God! we'll pu' the castle down about Lord Roldan's lugs."

"Come on, then," said James Rabson; "but remember, let us do nothing rashly—the law has ta'en a strong grip in this glen even within my memory."

"I hae a cousin that clerks to the procurator fiskie," (procurator fiscal,) cried one, "and I think I should ken gaye weel how to manage a matter of this kind; we'll just gang up and quietly terrogate him, and if he says no twice—twice, mind ye, when he should say ay ance, then he's a malefactor, and we may take a shot at him."

"That's fair, at any rate," said Edmonstone, "whether it's law or no—sae since we have baith right and law on our side, fy! let us off—we are owre lang here."

James Rabson and his companions were soon on the road for Roldan Castle; the turrets were already visible among the trees, and the Ladye Chapel was at hand, when the din of coach wheels and the clatter of horses' feet were heard coming up rapidly behind. On looking round they saw a cavalcade very different from what they themselves presented, approaching. First came two servants in green liveries, who seemed to peep into every bush and tree, as if they came to spy out the land, and dreaded an ambush; they were followed by two gentlemen in green hunting-frocks and scarlet vests, at whose side ran a couple of staghounds; behind these came a coach, so covered with carvings, so smeared with gold, and so massive in every part, that it looked more like a summerhouse come out to take the air on wheels, with all its inmates, or some Eastern caravan with all its priests bearing an idol—than a carriage made for the ordinary accommodation of mortals. "God have a care on us!" cried one or more of the crowd, "but this maun be the pope of Rome, with his scarlet ladye, come to pay the land a visit; it is awfu' to thole sic a thing to be done in a Christian land."

"Oh ye born gomerals," cried Nickie Neevison, who, leaving Mary Morison to the ministry of Jeanie Rabson, now joined the crowd; "ye born gomerals, it's the grand Lady Vane; the bravest beauty in all the south countree; make room for her, or she'll ride owre us." The crowd opened, leaving room for the strangers, who were now close at hand, to pass.

The carriage came up; it was drawn by four black horses, whose long tails swept the ground, and contained four inmates. One was an elderly gentleman of a noble look—bald, and somewhat corpulent; a priest in a gown of black

sarge, with a rope or chain round his middle, a square cap of dark cloth on his head, while from his neck depended a rosary of various coloured beads; an elderly dame, starched, thin, stately, and of a sour and disdainful look, sat behind; while at her side was a lady of such external elegance, that in the eyes of the wondering rustics she seemed at least a duchess. She was tall, her eyes were large and of vivid blue; her nose slightly aquiline, and a close observer might have seen that she took some pains with her complexion, for on her lip and chin a black hair or two escaping the inquisition of her own hands and her maid's eyes, intimated that the soil was fertile, and required weeding. Her blue riding habit and hat and feather, and above all her silk pantaloons peeping out at the extremity of her kirtle, gave her a swashing and a martial outside. "My conscience, lad!" said Cowan, as if addressing Lord Roldan, "ye'll be wived now—she's a trimmer, I'll warrant her; I wad like to hear her speak; I'll be bound her tongue rings like a bell; it wad clip clouts."

"Keep a civil tongue in your head, fellow," said one of the riders, menacing honest Willie with his whip; "keep a civil tongue, sirrah."

"And keep down yere silver-handled switch," replied the other, nothing daunted, "there's twa ounce of lead in Queen Anne."

"It's the grand Lady Vane," cried Nickie Neevison; "ye may talk of the looks of Mary Morison after this! a sow's lug to velvet; a bur-docken to a piony rose; we'll have a real lady to reign amang us, now. God bless your well-faured face, my lady; I make ye welcome to Glengarnock; a sight of you's gude for sair een, as the blin'man said to the May-morn sun;" and Nickie, in the excess of her zeal, all but prostrated herself before this new idol.

"What rude creature is this?" exclaimed Lady Vane, with a sharp, commanding voice—"what rude creature is this? Take her away, and desire these rustics to clear the road."

"Rude creature!" cried Nickie Neevison, in a tone thrice as jarring and shrill as her ladyship's; "ye rude creature, weel! I'm as weel gotten, and better educated than yersel, madam: d'ye think the Vanes came na like other fowk into the world, that ye maun take precedence of a'Eve's daughters?"

Nickie stepped back, and the cavalcade swept on; she would not, however, allow them to go on such easy terms, and continued to pour after them a tempest of abuse, which rattled around them, but harmed not, for one of the rear-most of a numerous train of domestics said, "Lord, how shrilly that woman sings!"

"She howls," observed a second, "like a beaten cur, and her language is about as intelligible."

When Lady Vane and her companions reached the ruinous chapel, a voice—it was that of the priest—commanded

hem to halt. "Here," he said, "miracles were wrought of old, and though the land has fallen into heresy, still is the face holy, for insensate things are not like sensate; once only and ever holy. Alight, therefore, my daughter, and humble yourself, even on your knees before the broken altar." He alighted while yet speaking, and putting off latched shoes of perfumed leather, and removing his cornered and embroidered cap from his head, stood upon the greenward, and awaited, with some impatience, her coming.

Lady Vane seemed not only in no haste, but to have no alish for such an act of humility; she was heard to mutter to her attendant, "What! kneel in this Scottish dog-kennel, in my best hunting kirtle!" She moved out of her carriage with an air of ruffled dignity; walked into the chapel, and knelt at the altar with the air of one who came to confer honour. Though her lips moved, no one could catch a word of her supplication.

"My daughter," said the priest, "this frame of mind is ominous; know that before this altar, all the brides, and many of them were far descended, of the house of Roldan, knelt and invoked the blessing of the saints and of the Virgin, and entreated the spirit which, for seven centuries, has influenced the destinies of the name, to be propitious. Be serious; there is no playing at fast and loose with divine beings."

She rose at once from her knees, and said, "I have knelt, sir priest, because I reverence what has been holy—press me no further; a new light has arisen among the nations; and its halo is over France, and those who ruled us in soul, ay, and in body too, are shrinking from its insufferable brightness."

She walked out of the chapel, tossing her plumes, and shook her seat with such a toss, as if she would have knocked it bottom out of the carriage.

"She's a teaser," said Willie Cowan: "what a mincing step she has, and how she sets herself out before and projects herself behind, and makes her pennants rustle like a turkey cock with his tail up among barn-door hens!"

On the castle lawn the lady was met by Lord Roldan, who, dressed in the extremity of fashion, seemed to emulate her extravagance. He bore on his person many yards of velvet, many yards of gold lace, a good deal of embroidery, a profusion of French cambric, half a quart of diamonds, and all a pint of perfume. Lady Vane eyed him through her glass as he advanced, smiled and nodded, and whispered something to her companion, who said, "Upon my honour a noble-looking man, and well arrayed; 'tis a pity that his castle is not as well put on as himself."

"My gold, girl," whispered the lady, "will make these ark turrets glitter. We are come, my lord," she said aloud, to invade you, and storm and take your towers; we have fought, too, a priest to bless them."

"Lady Vane," said Lord Roldan, waving his hat in his hand, and allowing the perfume of his powdered locks to escape at will, "you have but to look, and such is the influence of your eyes, that the towers of my ancestors will throw their gates open, and I shall cease to be their master."

"'Tis well worded, my lord," replied the lady; "but wherefore have I not your hand—must I take that of Father Vaughan? You noblemen of the north are as cold as your climate."

He offered his arm, Lady Vane laid her hand on it, sprang down, and said, "The days of loitering damsels and sentimental ladies are gone; a new charter is bestowed on our sex, and we are to meet men on equal terms—mind to mind, my lord—such are the rules of France—France, that dictated ruffles and lace, and gold-headed canes, has settled clothes and taken to the mind: the mind has its fashions as well as the body."

She put her arm on Lord Roldan's, led him a little aside, and said, "I have brought my uncle, and I have brought my priest; moreover, I have brought two gentlemen of my blood and name, but I have done so for fashion's sake. I shall take it upon me to arrange all that is necessary for the honour of the house of Vane."

"You do me but too much honour, Lady Vane," said Lord Roldan; "too much honour, by this kind confidence; all that I have to offer you is this worm-eaten tower, these barren hills, and their poor owner; here they are, in what words shall I surrender them?"

"You are too ceremonious and complimentary, my lord; but you have not mentioned all of which I require the surrender: Lord Roldan has named his towers, his lands, and his person; there is a heart, a free and unconstrained surrender of that is necessary before you can have a single acre on the banks of the Tees or in the glens of the Coquet."

Lady Vane, in saying this, dismissed the mock heroic air with which she had hitherto acted and spoken, and turned her large blue eyes on him as if she would have looked him through.

"I would not offer my hand," was the answer, "unless I could offer my heart also; but I imagined that all this and more was understood—or wherefore has your ladyship," he added with a smile, "deigned to make me this visit?"

"Well, now," she said, "that is a fair question. When I quitted the banks of the Tees, I thought as I did when last we had you as a guest, and an honoured one, in our towers; but ere I approached the banks of the Dee, I chanced to hear something which makes these questions quite proper."

"What has my Lady Vane heard?"

"Why, but a little; it is said there is one—a woman—a retainer, and, let me do her justice, a fair one, residing on

your estate, who has some claim, not only on your hand—written vows, nay, written contracts are talked of—but has given you a living proof of her affection. Why heard I not of this before, and why have I to learn it on the morn of my bridal day?"

Lord Roldan answered in a calm quiet tone, "What would the people of the vale of Tees have said, had I caused it to be proclaimed on my approach: All ye who are beautiful beware—Lord Roldan, who is coming among you, has been foolish with a young woman of a fair complexion in his native vale; take heed, therefore, and drive a harder bargain with him. Was this a secret? No, it was known to all the land."

The lady blushed a little as she said, "Nay, nay, it probably did not become you to proclaim your own folly: I ought to have sent some one to spy out the land and make an inventory of your lordship's character. I only say I hear of this for the first time. Now answer me one question: where is the boy, where's this Morison Roldan? such is the name of the youth."

Ere Lord Roldan could make answer, Nickie Neevison burst out from among the bushes which perfumed while they fringed the lawn, and exclaimed, "How can he tell ye, madam; d'ye think that he has the reckoning of the ship that carried the bairn away in his keeping, or that he hands the winds in his hands?"

"Begone!" said Lord Roldan, sternly. "Begone! This is a poor mad creature, my lady, and neither knows what she says nor to whom she speaks."

"I can answer for her lunacy," said Lady Vane; "her fantastic dress is not more so, than the strange words which she used to me on my way."

"Fantastic dress!" exclaimed Nickie. "I wish my lady saw herself—she's just a real hizzie-fallow—half man and half woman, wi' pantaloons where she should have petticoats, and a beard where nae beard should be."

Lord Roldan was too much enraged to smile. "Here, Lorraine and Loudon—here, Bell and Irving, remove this foolish person—but at your peril harm her."

His servants came at his bidding, but not before Nickie had made him a courtesy and cried, "Thank ye, my lord, ye were aye civil to a' that didna wear pantaloons: but I have nae need of your care: I have friends and servitors at hand. Here, Rabson and Rogerson—here, Cowan and Crombie—here, Harestanes and Halberson, tell this lord what we are come for."

To the surprise both of Lord Roldan and Lady Vane, and something to the alarm of others, the laird of Howeboddam and his companions, not less than a hundred in number, and armed with such weapons as anger and haste presented, ap-

peared at once on the lawn; some fifty seized the courtyard gate, while James Rabson and a dozen of the most eager advanced. James spoke first. "I am come to know, my lord, why you have caused our dear lad Morison to be kidnapped and carried away, and sold for a slave—ay! or murdered, if such be the pleasure of Captain Corabane. Answer me, my lord, for an answer I shall have before I quit this spot."

"Foolish rustic," replied Lord Roldan, "come you to my own lawn, and in this presence, to put rude questions! what I have done I am ready to answer at any bar, but not to a mob of menials."

"We are men," said James; "is your lordship more? You speak as if you were a god, and could dispose of us at pleasure—we are men."

"Not all of us," said Nickie Neevison, "for I'm nae better than a woman: her ladyship, however, is mair, if I may judge by her dress and her whiskers."

"I have seen and heard enough—ay, and more than enough," said Lady Vane; "your lordship is accused, and you deny not the accusation—nay, you bring me here, that I may be insulted by the very scum of creation—that I may hear my station and my person ridiculed and traduced even on your own lawn. Were I mistress of these towers, I would—" and she shook her riding whip at the rustics, who were now gathering around her.

Lord Roldan drew himself up, and said, "These towers have been held a thousand years, and a woman's hand never unfurled the banner. Lady Vane says she has seen and heard enough, and more than enough. Will her ladyship deign to honour my old moth-eaten stronghold, or shall we bring the chapel altar here and be wed on this fair green and in this courtly presence?"

"No!" exclaimed the lady, the top of her cheek bones growing red as fire, and her very feathers partaking of her emotion. "No, my lord, I have seen with my own eyes, I have heard with my own ears, I desire no other witnesses—we met at first coldly, and coldly we must part. But, what—lo! here is another distressed lady: one come, perchance, to give testimony to your constancy. Shall we bring out the chapel altar, my lord, and have the ceremony performed on this fair field, and before these courtly witnesses? Come hither, holy father, and make this good lord and this distressed dame one."

"There needs no scorn, lady," said Mary Morison, advancing from the pathway which skirted the lawn; "I come not to upbraid, but to release; I come not to beg, but to bestow; I come, lady, to enable Lord Roldan to fulfil his engagements to you with honour."

Lady Vane looked with surprise; she was touched by the

beauty of Mary's person as well as by the dignity and elegance with which she spoke. The brightness of her eyes; the roses impaired by sorrow, but now refreshed by early remembrances; her graceful form and her melodious voice, all united to exalt her in Lady Vane's opinion; who softened her haughty tone, and even advanced a step or two, as she thus addressed her:

"No scorn was intended, madam; the little that was, must go to this good lord, who, neglecting such looks and such merit as yours, and seeking other alliances, shows such lack of taste as I could not till now have given him credit for."

"Lady," said Mary, "I complain not of his neglect; I have but myself to blame: I was young and foolish, and believed what was told me, and having read in story of the high mating with the humble, I imagined the like might happen in life. I was deceived: that is to say, I deceived myself."

"Fy, fy, my lord!" said Lady Vane; "and was inequality of birth and station your only reason for your conduct? A new light is breaking upon the world; the proud and the titled will probably soon think it an honour to find husbands as well as wives among the lowborn; we are all equal by nature."

"It is enough, lady," said Mary, "that I come neither to make a claim nor to utter upbraidings; we cannot force our feelings. Lord Roldan has said and done that to me and mine, which were he to offer me his hand and his land, would make me reject all; not in scorn, lady, but in the calm resolution of an unchangeable heart. Farewell! I came to loose; if I have not done it sufficiently, I shall do it again. I bless you, lady, for bearing with me so mildly; when you are mistress of these towers you will find many warm hearts around you; be gentle and be kind, and you will live in every bosom."

During this conversation, which passed all in a few minutes, Lord Roldan wist not well what to say or do; of Lady Vane he had seen much to convince him that she was as imperious as she was wealthy. While he was in the act of weighing her in the balance of his own mind, the random saying of a peasant made the scale in which she was placed kick the beam. "What fierce blue eyes she has got," said one, "and what a proud southland nose!"

"The eyes and the nose are weel enough," said Willie Cowan; "but d'ye no see, man, that the towers of Roldan will never win an heir from her ladyship?"

"Gudesake, no," said the other.

"Then I'll show ye," responded Willie. "D'ye mark her chin—look at it, atween and the sunshine, and tell me what ye see."

The peasant looked as desired. "I see—but gosh, no—

eh, it canna be—and yet deil hae me if there binna—I see hairs, Willie Cowan, where they shouldna be. What may that forbode, now ?”

“It bodes,” said Willie, “barren wedlock ; she’ll never doudle a bairnie on her knee, nor ken how sweet the word mither is to a woman’s ear.” These words helped, with the imperious tone which the lady assumed, to render Lord Roldan cold. It was not altogether her great wealth which he coveted. Lady Vane was of a noble catholic stock, and he desired an heir to the towers of Roldan ; for of the lawful male line, he was now the sole survivor. At last he found words.

“Lady Vane,” he said, “does injustice to herself as well as to her humble suitor, in discussing his character with knaves and menials. There stands the tower of Roldan and here is its lord, ready to usher Lady Vane in. The men of my house”—he said this with a smile—“command on their own lands and sometimes on their neighbours’.”

“The lords of Roldan may command whom they can,” exclaimed Lady Vane, “but none of them shall ever command me : these towers I shall never enter. He that is false to such a creature as this, so beautiful, so mild, and so dignified, can never be true to me. I have heard much and seen much, and in these words I bid you farewell.”

She turned suddenly from him, sprang into her carriage, held up her glove, and whip and spur carried her down the avenue and into the public road, with a rapidity at which the peasants who followed the laird of Howeboddum stood aghast.

“I’m thinking, Lord Roldan,” said an old white-headed domestic who opened the gate to admit him, “I’m thinking, that if it had been our fate to get Elfrida Vane for a mistress, that we would have had to cool her sometimes in the auld vault where one of the Musgraves, Margaret by name, was confined for malefactions of temper, in your great-grandsire’s day.”

Lord Roldan smiled. He retired to his chamber, and his thoughts ran much on Mary Morison, who had shown such unlooked-for elevation of soul ; the parting words of Willie Cowan, too, rang still in his ears. “Conscience, but Mary is the natural born lady, after a’ ; she has the true stamp on her, and this madam with the whiskers is but a counterfeit. God is aye right and man is aften wrang.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
 And leave auld Scotia's shore?
 Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
 Across th' Atlantic's roar?
 Oh sweet grows the lime and the orange,
 An' the apple on the pine.

BURNS.

To not a few of the peasants this peaceful termination of their expedition seemed unwelcome. "They couldna see what was to have hindered them," they said, "from having a touch at the auld tower; though, nae doubt, it wad have been a sad thing to lose a bride and a castle baith in ae day; and then Lord Roldan heeded naebody's feelings but his ain, and why should ony respect be shown to his. But then here lay the matter: the witch, Nanse Halberson, had soothed Mary about her son—they did nae weel ken how; and when she was pleased Jeanie Rabson was pleased; and when Jeanie was pleased, the laird of Howeboddum, helpless body, was pleased likewise. It was true, they said, that they wad hae had a brush for't, because the baron had some stanch hands about him, and was a ringing deevil himsel when his blude was up; nor could they hide from themselves that they saw sundry gun-muzzles presented from loopholes and windows; but then they were on a just errand, wi' law and mercy on their side; yet after a', it was maybe just as well as it was; wha wad have calked up the holes made in shooting at one anither's bare faces? and wha kenned but that Morison was forced awa wi' his ain consent! he was aye a deep deevil and naebody could fadom him. And see," they concluded, "yonder's Mary, and Jean, and James, like three nuts on a stalk—they may e'en take their ain whitter, and we'll away hame, greater fules than when we came here."

The three walked together in silence for some time; at last, Jeanie Rabson, when they came to the separation of the roads, said, "Mary, woman, ye will be lonesome now in the Elfin-glen; wad it no be better in ye to come up to Howeboddum, and draw in a chair and sit down wi' us; it wad be a great pleasure to the laird and me—no but that I'm willing to come often and see ye—and the place is weel worth gaun to see suppose there was naebody there—but I'm na sae yauld as I was, lass, when we ran about the braes and pou'd the gowans fine, as the sang says, that poor Mori-

son used to croon, for he couldna sing, though his voice was like music itsel."

"I cannot quit the Elán cottage and the bonny glen," said Mary; "every bend of the burn is like a faithful friend, and every tree is like a truthfu' acquaintance; the very hawthorns when they put on their summer dress seem to ask me to look at them, and the bits of trouts jouk joyous frae bank to bank, and the birds come a branch lower down and sing sweeter, I think, as I wander along. It would be like sundering the right hand frae the left, Jeanie Rabson, to separate us."

The laird, who had not before opened his lips, said, "Weel, weel, ye mauna urge it further; we dinna like ye the less, Mary Morison, for yere love of the auld glen. I like to look at it maist daily myself from the top of our broomy knowes: gude-day; ye'll no be coming hame just yet, Jeanie." And homeward plodded the laird, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Some one, as he trudged along, heard him say, "Weel, I'll never say north and south mair, but just say Mary Morison and Elfrida Vane, for wha ever saw sic a twosome! the tane a lily, and the tither a nettle: God is aye right and man is aften wrang, as Willie Cowan says."

Jeanie and Mary walked into the glen together. "I am afraid," said the former, "that there's mair at yere heart, Mary, than the mere liking to the glen—and the glen's bonnie enough—whilk gars ye cling to it like the limpet to the rock, or the honeysuckle to the birch. When I bade ye come and draw in yere chair, and sit down in Howeboddom, I meant mair than the mere act implies; but let us gang in and sit down, for I'm gaun to speak seriously now, lass."

They seated themselves and remained some time silent; Jeanie looked up and down, and out at the door, and out of the window. "It's a' for your sake, Mary, that I am seeing there are nae listeners or comers—for what I'm about to say I carena as far as regards the laird and myself, that a' the wide world heard it—and I think events of late seem to countenance my proposal: here's our poor lad, Morison, borne away to Hispan—what d'ye call't—oily—here is Lord Roldan seeking a wife, and here is our James willing to have ane; d'ye understand me now? Will ye come and rule Howeboddom wi' me, rigg and rigg about, and make the road that takes ye tilt through the kirk? Love wi' our James is as strong as death; and I aye think since he saw that Morison was sic a noble lad that he has liked the mither the better; but, Mary, that couldna be."

Mary looked up; more than ordinary brightness was in her eyes, and more than common colour in her cheek. "Jeanie," she said, "I have thought, God forgive me! sometimes of dying; for oh, dark, dark thoughts come into my head now and then; but what ye have said reconciles me to life, and tells me that the sun of heaven has light for the most

wretched, and will shine on me yet. Oh, Jeanie Rabson! whiles I thought that even your love was from compassion, but this offer on the part of your noble brother tells me that I have redeemed my name and am once more worthy of being numbered among the matrons of this land; God bless him, and God reward him for it."

"Ye maun reward him for it yersel, Mary; the time and the manner are baith left to you, and dinna think, lass, the less of our James for no coming and preferring his ain suit; James Rabson can speak like ony minister when he's rightly moved—ay, and act like ony hero, when he's righteously angered—I wish ye but knew, Mary, what I had to say to keep him from striking Lord Roldan dead on his ain lawn, this morning; he has two men's wisdom, as weel as two men's strength at times."

"Jeanie Rabson," said the other, "I will never marry; I couldna stand the clash of the land. Oh! the tongues that my bridal morning would let loose, and the unlicensed words they would use! The very circumstance of a pure and honourable man wedding me would be one of their chief reproaches; my error, which they are now inclined to forget, would be remembered anew; and wha kens, Jeanie, but their words, which would poison the air, might poison the ear of your brother, and he might rue him of his unhappy bargain. Jeanie, I shall never marry."

"Ye mauna say that, Mary, ye mauna say that; ye dinna ken what is predestined. But though I hae spoken with a sisterly tongue as was well my part for our James, ye mauna think that I either undertook to plead for him willingly, or thought I should succeed. No! I kenned ye owre weel for that, and had I no kenned ye, the sight I saw in your distracted moments to-day wad hae been confirmation enough. The blue riband and the shining link of lang hair which ye carry in your bosom hinder yere heart frae warming at another name; Lord Roldan wears powder now; but I mind his glancing locks eighteen years syne. Ah, Mary Morison!"

"And why should I not wear it?" replied Mary; "it is insensate, and cannot harm me as he on whose temples it once glittered has done. Oh, Jeanie, you said a wise thing, nor is it the less wise that you found it in a song; true love is strong as death. I passionately, ay, madly loved him, and lavished on him all the treasures of my young heart: how sad my requital has been I need not tell you; how he has continued to annoy my loneliness and make my solitude sadder, you have more than a guess; nay, that to smoothe the way to his marriage, he put a tongue and hand out of the way that were likely to remonstrate, I have had now proof sufficient; yet, Jeanie, I cannot hate him; I cannot forget him; I see him wheresoever I look by day, and in my dreams by night

is he present. Judge ye, then, if I am in a condition to become another man's wife."

"Ye have just said what I expected ye would say," said Jeanie Rabson, with a sigh; "but"—here she rose, and seemed inclined to begone without finishing her sentence.

"But what? Jeanie, my own dear Jeanie, but what? You were about to say something more; speak out."

"I was about to observe," said Jeanie, "that with these feelings it would be better, safer, to come frae this lonely place and dwell wi' us; we are sisters in heart if we are nae to be connected by marriage."

"No," said Mary, mildly but firmly, "here I maun abide; my heart can hold no other love, and my sight, I think, abide no other scenes but those around: had I all the wealth of the world, here would I build my bower, and here would I live, and if company could not find me, I would not find out company. I have ta'en my resolution. That I have not refused James Rabson from other hopes he may yet live to see proofs; for, Jeanie, a something here tells me that my trials are not all over; but sooner will yon tide wash down Colvend rock, than I shall swerve from my resolves."

On her way to Howeboddum, Jeanie could not help saying to herself, "She's a wondrous creature, now, this Mary Morison! but what the new trial can be to which she alludes surpasses my describing. Its no likely that Lord Roldan will offer himself; and its no likely she'll refuse him an he did, sae there's nae trial can be there; weel after a' women are queer creatures; but here comes a queerer creature than any of us."

The person to whom Jeanie alluded was Dominie Milligan; he was advancing with strides both long and quick; he had a staff in his hand which he grasped with more than usual firmness, and his eye intimated that the body was obeying the workings of the brain, for it seemed turned on some distant object so effectually, that all near was invisible. He no more saw Jean Rabson, than the ground over which he was striding saw him—she spoke as he approached, but he answered not. He swerved a little, which denoted a sense of hearing, and that he was aware of some coming object. "John Milligan!" said Jeanie, extending her arm, and seizing him by the breast of the coat. He stared, lifted up one foot, and gaped; much to the amusement of the heiress, who looked at him from head to foot, and then burst into a fit of laughter.

The dominie, who was somewhat nervous on the score of ridicule, awakened at once. "Miss Jeanie Rabson, and is this you? Oh, I heard, woman, this blessed morning, that you and the laird were sorely bested by the atheistical lord, and the popish lady, and I but staid to glance into the pages of one or two of our most fructifying controversialists, that I might refresh myself for the contest, and tarried but

the taking of this staff, lest carnal weapons might be required, and here am I hastening to the strife."

"Dominie," said Jeanie, "what time of the day d'ye think it is?"

"Why, about the hour of eleven of the clock. Do you think I know not what I am about?"

"Scarcely, John," replied the maiden. "Eyes west—what is yon sitting on the top of the hills of Dee—is't the moon, think ye?"

"The moon!" said the dominie, "who ever saw the silver planet shining at this hour of the day!—Jeanie, you are merry."

"I'm thinking it maun be the setting sun," said Jeanie, "mair by token the birds are seeking the bushes, and the kye are coming hame; and, hearken, that was the bum-clock. Oh, dominie, ye lost yourself among the controversial fathers. Why, man, if I were to forget mysel, and get called wi' you in the kirk, ye wadna be forthcoming at the bridal?"

"Try me, oh Jeanie, try me," said the dominie. "But you are a pleasant maiden—and now, on looking closer, I'm dubious that you are right about the time of the day; though, Miss Jean, ye would find me more accurate in matrimonial engagements. But though ye are one of the wisest and most serious maidens in these parts, I never can find you in a sober mood—ye will never talk seriously about aught but poor Morison and his mother."

"Deed, dominie," replied Jeanie, "that's a subject to make the lightest noddle in the parish serious—the lad's lost, but no I trust for ever: we have something like an assurance, not only of his safety, but of the airt he is spirited away to. They ca' the place Hispaniola: some of the folk are black, and some of them are white, and some of them are atween the twa—the willow-wands bear ready-made sugar, and the hazels have gowden pippins; the briar-bushes, instead of dew bear drappit honey, and for red potatoes, they have pineapples, and, moreover, under your feet you find pomegranates."

At the word pomegranate, the dominie fidgeted and coughed; he remembered his trial sermon, and glancing his eye on Jeanie, perceived, or imagined he perceived, a roguish twinkle of eye which intimated that she had a twofold meaning: perhaps he might have been angry for a minute or so; but on looking forward, he saw the smoke ascending from the supper fire of Howeboddom-house, and the lights beginning to twinkle backward and forward from chamber to ha', and he smothered his wrath, increased his pace, and was soon comfortably seated beside the laird on the lang settle, with all the hinds, male and female, around him.

To the western world of sugar cane and pineapples the

wind was now fast wafting the hero, such as he is, of our tale. The breeze was so full and so fair, that had the Wild-fire been carrying a king to be crowned instead of a nameless youth into slavery, it could not have blown more benignantly. This was observed by the captain and his captives, and both drew different auguries from the circumstance.

"Morison," said Davie Gellock, "why should we despond, when the very wind takes our part? it wadna blaw in that sweet and musical way if it meant us mischief."

"Yes, but," said Morison, "it blows the same for the evil as for the good; if it would blow Corsbane east and us west, I could understand it."

"Hout, now," replied his sole counsellor, "this is no like you at a'; ye dinna ken what may be the meaning of Providence in a' this; may na the same wind blaw for Corsbane's harm and for our benefit? But gudesake speak lowne; he has lang lugs; and though I dinna mind him a bodle on dry land where cocks craw, I dread him where Mother Carey's chickens cheep. I canna say that I ever feel sicker on those kittle planks; and sant water takes a' the fizen out o' me."

"Hurrah! my lads," exclaimed the captain, as he kept pacing, with short quick steps, about the deck; "see how our bonnie Wildfire goes flashing through the waves—snoring like a whole congregation of Presbyterians at a four-hours' sermon—we are making capital way. Witch Nanse has kept her word: a fair wind, she said, for fair deeds, a foul wind for foul deeds; now, damme! that's what I call the common sense of the thing. Old Mother Weir used to wrap up her blessings in such odd tough words, that they might be made to mean anything—they were as dark as a diplomatic despatch; but Nanse speaks out—she has no mist in her meaning."

Martin, who bore something like second command in the vessel, turned the tobacco in his cheek once or twice, coughed dryly, and glancing at the captain said, "Mayhap you are not squeezing the right meaning out of the witch's words. I have a rough guess that she meant the wind would only be fair while we behaved fair to these two land-loupers; d'ye mind the cloud that descended and the wind that blew but t'other day, when, for something they said or did, ye spoke of making them walk the plank?"

The captain turned quick on him, but there appeared such a carelessness, that Corsbane's fear was quieted, and he said, "Well, it makes little matter whether they go to the devil with a wet skin or a dry one; the witch, damn her, has more to do with the wind than we are willing to believe. I suppose Nanse can have no objection, since she sells us fair winds, that we should be merchants, too, and take our goods to market. I say, Jack, since you are willing to be a good

fellow, I shall make you a present of that sly demure chap whom they call Davie; he will bring a capital price for ye, my lad, in the Spanish settlements; as for Morison, I shall keep him on my own hands: there's something in him which may turn out well, if he will but listen to counsel—but, bravo! here's land."

The eager and lively cry of "Land! land!" made all hurry to the deck. Morison was one of the foremost; he stood on the forecastle and beheld the sunny mountains and the expanding vales of the isles of spice and balm, and stretched out his hand as if to grasp them; his colour rose and his eye flashed, and he measured the space of amber waters which separated him from them with something of impatience. But Corsbane, instead of standing into the noble bay, which seemed to invite him, and making for the city whose walls touched the water, veered away from the crowded harbour and the inhabited place, and skirting the isle, sought out a more secluded spot in which to drop anchor. This he found in the bosom of a lagoon some six or eight leagues distant from the city: the vessel threaded her way among a cluster of low flat isles, on some of which deer were seen, and on others, birds beautiful in all, save song, and anchored under the shade of a group of gigantic palms, whose stems ascending perpendicularly a hundred feet into the air, threw out their broad majestic branches on all sides, and formed a verdant firmament, beneath which birds flitted with their gaudy wings; through which the sun, now setting, could scarce force a solitary ray, and beneath which the mariners wiped their sweaty brows, and looked on one another, and congratulated Corsbane on his happy voyage.

Morison walked about the deck; though one or two mariners kept their eyes upon him and seemed ready to prevent any attempt he might make to escape. By the slant light of the setting sun he perceived here and there a mansion looking down the long natural avenues of the fig tree and the palm: and though his ears were greeted with no natural music from the birds, he was cheered another way, for the twilight breeze now breathing freely about him brought odours of many kinds on its wings, telling him how much nature had done for this land of sunshine and slaves compared to the rough heathery hills of his native isle.

When the sun departed, night did not come—at least no night of the kind he had been accustomed to: the golden day was withdrawn, like a veil from the sky, only to exhibit the deep splendour of the evening. The clear blue glory of the firmament—the sparkling lustre of the stars large and fiery, and now and then a halo of remote lightning, flashing over all like his own Aurora, formed such a spectacle as he had never dreamed of, and which it was

worth risking bondage to behold. Morison looked earnestly and silently; his own fate was forgotten for a moment, and he could not avoid saying aloud with the psalmist,

“ When I look up unto the heavens,
Which thine own fingers framed,
Unto the moon and to the stars,
Which were by thee ordained,
Then say I—”

“ Yo ho ! younker,” cried a mariner who had never yet addressed him, “ you make but a bad splice of your words : we could not fetch up the anchor to such unmelodious strains as these—framed and ordained won’t do—they jingle like a cracked cymbal in the hands of a Senegal Indian : splice it, man ! making words clink is no such marvel.”

“ Whisht ! whisht ! for God’s sake, whisht !” said Martin, “ these can scarcely be called the words of man ; they are the inspired scriptures—part of the eighth psalm, Stephen : whisht ! whisht ! ye frighten me to hear ye.” Stephen was silent at once, and busied himself about the removal of bales from the ship to a sort of summerhouse, or rather warehouse, which stood among the trees : while Martin, with a clasped book and a pencil, kept note of all that was transferred from the ship to the shore. While busied in this work, for which the sky afforded him ample light, Davie Gellock slipped to his side : Jack continued his insertions.

“ Number thirteen—stay—contains twelve pieces of sea-coloured silk, got out of the—hum—hum—hum. Number fourteen—stop—contains six-and-twenty pieces of printed cotton, Glasgow build—got—hum—hum—hum. Number fifteen—bide a wee ; a fellow would require three heads like the clerk’s dog of the bottomless pit, who could moor—that’s not the word neither—pen all the things down in ship-shape style, you move them so fast, my handy lads. Number fifteen, what’s the mark of number fifteen !”

“ A bloody palm pressed on it—seems a lady’s—here’s the mark of the ring.”

“ I won’t enter that, by Heaven !” said Martin, “ it was a cruel business, and I wash my hands of it. I ken ane that will find number fifteen entered against him in a damned black book when he crosses the line that separates this world from the next.”

“ What’s all this palaver about,” growled Corsbane ; “ let the goods remain where they are till we have drank to another expedition such as our last. But here comes my jolly boat on wheels to carry me up to Saint Salvador’s nunnery—I’ll be back in an hour.”

A carriage drawn by four fine horses, with servants all as black as polished ebony, and their clothes as white as snow, came to the beach ; the captain was carried and placed on

cushions by four of these sooty domestics, who vied with each other by low salaams and other indications, in showing how much they were slaves. Nor did the captain appear at all desirous of placing them on a higher footing; he caned them right and left as they bore him to the carriage, exclaiming, "You vagabonds! you have got vile and plump since I sailed; you black frights! you have grown sleek and saucy since I last saw you; you have been living on the fattest and carousing with the fairest; but I'll bring you down, or damme! And how are all at the nunnery! Has Madame Nigrini got cured of her love of rambling in the woods! Has Mother Morning ta'en any of her long walks by moonlight to the lagoon, when the sailors were ranting in the bay! And has Miss Midnight sound sleep, or does she cool herself in her kirtle among the sugar houses when the presses are busy and my coloured overseer is there! Oh! you won't speak; never mind, I'll know all by and by. Well, then, have you any complaints to make!"

"Only one, Massa Cursbone, only one."

"And what is it! Speak out; I wish no one screened: I'm a lover of justice, and a hater of oppression. What is it!"

"Oh de steward, dam him, massa, and dam his new fish too; ah! he too cunning for de poor neger."

"Well, damn him, then, with all my heart!" exclaimed Corsbane. "Now what has he done—and what kind of fish is his new fish!"

"Ah, a dam droll fish! him all lean on one side, and him got but one eye: him dam lean, and make poor neger dam lean."

"So, then, my poor black devils, they have split a herring up the middle and passed it off for a whole fish upon you—a sly piece of work; but they'll not find that I have a blind side. It was so soft of you, however, my ebony friends, that I must give you a touch of the cane, merely to teach you sharpness, and not from any ill-will I have at you—none."

He applied his cane with remorseless severity, and the slaves went groaning and writhing along, and cursing and threatening internally their wanton oppressor.

The crew of the Wildfire, under the united control of Martin and Dempster, had gathered into groups, some above and some below; the former was seated on a carronade, which, hitherto masked, he now brought out openly, and was preparing it for action with another of the same calibre, with Davie to aid him.

"I canna tell how it is," said Martin, "but I hae a sort of grue upon my mind—a foreboding of evil as it were—I fand myself putting these twa deil's bastard bairns in fettle, before I was aware."

"Aweel," said Davie, "and if sic a thing happens, this is a braw bit to have a tulzie in."

"A braw bit!" said the mariner, "it's like fighting wi' pistols in the circumference of a beef barrel. There's nae room, bairn, there's nae room—even Pat Phelan couldna jump owre Newry canal, till he had seven mile of a ram-race. D'ye take me?"

"I hae something like a glimmer on't," said Davie; "but Johnnie, speak to me this way: if the warst should come, will ye hinder a lad to stand sidie for sidie wi' ye while breath's atween his lips, and blude's in his veins?"

"Ye mean yersel belike, lad," said Martin, "but I maun first feel the grip o' yere hand, before I can say ay or no; do yere warst with that, now." And he held out a hand as black as a coal, and as hard as iron, and eyed Davie with a smile, a grim one. Davie seized the offered hand with right good will, and gave it an earnest squeeze.

"Ye'll do," said Martin, "an ye had a year or twa owre yere head."

"I maun do now, Johnnie," said he, "and a' for the sake of Jenny Skipmire, yere ain mither's fu' cousin."

"Eh! what did ye say, lad? whaevers dear to Jenny's be dear to me."

"Then," said Davie, "I may safely say I have been dear to Jenny; she dreed the birthtime pang for me, and even now she's sitting wi' moist een at home, wondering what's become of her boy Davie."

The rough seaman passed the cuff of his jacket twice over his eyes, and then said, "Why the devil, cousin, didn't ye tell me of this sooner; ah! Jenny Skipmire was like a mither to me; mony a time she heated my cauld hungry mouth when I was a mitherless bairn—God bless her—and is she well, cousin? but why the hell didn't ye tell me before? I would have cut the long yarn of yere voyage short."

"That was just what I dreaded ye wad do, Cousin John. Ye see I have an unco liking, and it's weel my part, for Morison here, and I maun, if possible, see him safely out of this sair strait; sae I just thought it best to come whiggung alang wi' him; but a' will gang right, when we have you for a friend."

Martin busied himself about the carronades, and as Davie stooped to help him, he said in a low tone, "What can he do for himself, this young fellow now, that you and one or two more maybe have such a liking for? I suppose if one were to help him out of the bilboes, he would stand as I saw him to-night, and count how many horns the moon has."

"I'll tell ye what he can do, cousin," said Davie; "he can take the head off a flying swallow with a pistol bullet; and I'll wad my best leg 'gainst a beggar's crutch, that wi' a

sword he'll pink every jacket on board the Wildfire, no forgetting Captain Crossbain's, and no take a prick in return."

"If he can do the half of what ye say, he will do; so no more at present: only make no outbreak for a day or two, and look as if ye knew nothing, and cared for nothing. I wish the fellow's head was grilled for a supper to Satan, that mounted this cursed carronade. I say, Davie—what the devil's your name? lend a hand here, till I lodge it, it goes jumping about and won't bide by its moorings."

The sound of horses' feet were now heard in the distant grove, and in a minute or so the captain, accompanied by his black chaplains, as he called his chief negroes, came to the beach and shouted, "Ohoy, Johnnie Martin! ohoy, Tom Dempster! be busy, my merry lads, and take me on board."

The captain soon stood on his own deck. "Bring hither the black book," he said, "and let me reckon with my jolly lads for the last voyage; another may come so soon that we mayn't have leisure to see how rich we are." He opened the ledger, and in a few words informed his audience that as he was both merchant and commander, he would take the whole venture into his own hands, and settle their shares in hard cash. "I have arranged all," he said, "with the help of Martin, who was quite sober, and Dempster, who was wholly drunk; and as I was half-seas over myself, nothing could be fairer, damme! What say you, my lads?"

"As for Dempster," said a Galwegian pirate, "he's come of a kind that never had ony skill in honest division; and it's weel kenned that your honour skellies fearfully at times, when yere ain interest's in the balance: but as for Johnnie Martin, he's as honest as the blind old beldame Fortune herself, and I hae nae doubt but the division's a just ane."

"Damme! that's just what I say," exclaimed the captain; "so here's your cash, my hearties! Each of you get four waistcoats and half a dozen wives, and meet me at this little cove again within eight days—so good-night!"

"A word with your honour," said one of the seamen, lingering, after he had received as much gold and silver as he could find pockets for.

"Let us have it," said Corsbane; "but make the yarn short."

"The shorter the better," said the pirate. "The twa younkers are seemly and marketable—the twa, I mean, that we grabbed in Glengarnock bay: they will maist bring their weight in gold. How much am I to have out of their price?"

"Just that!" exclaimed Corsbane, making a blow at him with his cutlass; "just that, you whelp! You are the last to seize a prey, and ever the foremost at the division of it. One of these younkers I have bestowed on Johnnie Martin, there, the other I keep to myself. I will improve his voice, as the Italian hath it, and then place him at the head of the

nunnery, to keep my *lignumvite* Venuses in order." The acts, as well as the words of the captain, were received with three cheers; the mariners dispersed to rid themselves of the encumbrance of their ash, each in his own way.

"Bide with me," whispered Martin to Davie and to Morison: "I'll undertake to carry ye baith up to the nunnery, as he calls it, in the morning." This arrangement was the readier made, inasmuch as Corsbane was aware that Morison could not well run away. "Where can he run to," he muttered; "if he runs into the mountains, the blacks, who have ta'en to the bush and live like wild beasts, will slay him alive, and bid him carry his skin to the market."

In the morning, instead of being awakened by the song of the bird and the brook as he was in the *Elfin-glen*, Morison was aroused by the sun, which rose above the sea like a burning fire, scattering its flaming brands on bay and headland, and filling all the space between land and sky with a moving flame. Martin, whom he found up and busy, said, "Bowls rowe right, bairns—bowls rowe right. Davie here has fallen to my share, and he'll find that blude's warmer nor water. As for you, Morison, we maun contrive something; but maybe ye wad like to be at the head of the nunnery—it's a post, I can tell ye, that I dinna advise, though doubtless in skilful hands it might be profitable."

"We are now on land," said Morison; "I am a freeborn man, and mean to assert my claim to that right: what is to hinder me even now to quit you at once, and go whither I please?"

"I'm sure naebody wad hinder ye, unless my cousin David here, or me did it. It wad just be what your warst wisher wants: ye wad be in captivity past remeid, or in a bloody grave, before a couple of hours flew by. Our men are on a shore-cruise, and there's no sic a set of unhang'd blackguards between Britain and the bottomless pit. I have had my hands about ye ever since ye got the douk in the bay; sae come wi' me, if ye wish to live."

The nunnery was a building in the Spanish fashion, and had been founded by that soldier—a Roldan too, and sprung from the Scottish house—who rebelled against Columbus. The situation was one of great beauty; a deep clear stream came down from the hills, and separating when approaching a fine mound or knoll of some eight acres or more, ran on each side and uniting towards the sun, fell into the sea, forming the lagoon in which the Wildfire now lay. On that mound the mansion was built; several eras and several tastes were visible in its construction. The columns, originally of palm or mahogany, had been replaced with marble; the pediment was still of wood; and for the crucifix which during two centuries had occupied the summit, a monstrous mermaid of wood, carved and painted green and red by the ship-carpenter.

ter, after drawings by Captain Corsbane, sprawled in the sun to the particular delight of the negroes, who were charmed by the width of her mouth, the length of her teeth, and her enormous tail. The floors, at first paved with red brick, were now laid with cedar or mahogany, nay, the captain's own room was paved—by report at least—with dollars; the house was of great extent and had formerly been fortified, and might be said to be so still, for the stream was deep though not very broad, which enclosed it, and the bridge by which it was approached had a gate with a warder.

Yet the house was but as a wart on the cheek of beauty; a toad in a bed of lilies. The mound on which it stood was covered with flowers of all hues, and scented with fruits of all odours. But differing from the flowers of our cold moist island, these, instead of dwelling on the ground, towered into the air; what is with us an herb, rose there like a tree, and the bloom with which the eye was dazzled came out in all the brightness of the sun, stinted neither in breadth nor in beauty.

The fruits were on the same scale, and presented a dessert worthy of Paradise; their size, their beauty, and their fragrance, cost man no pains, but in the plucking. The anana, the tamarind, the papaw, the guava, the custard apple, and a score of other rich fruits, were here showered as thickly in their season as snow is on a British landscape: nor was the beauty depending on fruits and flowers alone, for through the whole, dancing like starlight, flitted ten thousand humming birds, of the brightness of whose plumes neither pen nor pencil can convey any idea. From the size of a common beetle to the bigness of a wren, these plumed insects filled the air and the grove: the green of the emerald, the purple of the amethyst, the vivid lustre of the ruby, now uniting, now sundering, glanced and glittered on all sides. These were objects of elegance, there were others of grandeur; namely, a belt of trees which enclosed the mound, not quite regular, but waving in their course to show they were planted by the hand of nature; these were chiefly palm and mountain cabbage; tall, and straight, and tapering, and without branch or leaf, they climbed into the air, as perpendicularly as the columns of some antique temple, to the height of eighty, nay, a hundred feet; and then no longer able to contain themselves, they threw out with wondrous order and regularity such a multitude of boughs as formed a roof, through which the scented wind could make its way, but no sun could penetrate.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh, little did my mither think,
 The day she cradled me,
 What lands I was to wander in,
 Or what death I should die.
Old Song.

"Why now, my lads," exclaimed Martin to Morison and his cousin, "this beats all your proud castles and grand scenes of old Scotland to sticks! All got, too, by the pipe and the cutlass; there's no heritable jurisdiction here save that of steel and bullet. Now, I'm not sure that, to smart lads like yourselves, the life of a rover wouldn't be an acceptable thing; if so, be as you wish it; a word to Jack Martin's enough: he has some handy lads to stand by him for good or evil. Only mind me; no nailings down of hatches, or scuttlings in the dead of the night; no bales of silk marked with the bloody palm; ye read me! No, honest Jack Martin is a friend to all the world, save the lousy Portuguese, the sulky Spaniard, and the bragging French."

"Cousin John," replied Davie, "I dare say mony a ane makes their bread, and if this be Captain Corsbane's house, very good bread too, in the way you mention. I think, too, it would suit me gaye and weel, for ye see I'm no auld enough to have any fixed notions of thine and mine; and I like, too, yere antipathies, seeing that the three nations ye name are wealthy, and can afford to pay a tax on the high seas. But then, ye see, it wadna suit Morison here; he has queer notions of his ain; and having heard that the French have not only tired o' their king and chappit his head off, but hae preached a crusade against a' fowk wi' crowns and coronets, he e'en thinks o' trying his fortune wi' them; and ye see I winna leave him; that's a thing predestined; see I'm thinking we maun put off this rover matter till we have settled the other concern."

"Ye'll find that a tough concern," said Martin; "but every man to his mind's my motto. Jack Martin has got enough to buy a bit o' ground and build a house in Carasfairn, or he can up with the jolly badge, just as he chooses. But shut mouth and open eyes; we are now on the bridge over which some go that never return."

On entering the nunnery, they found three or four maimed mariners halting and hirpling about the corridor; each of them had a cutlass at his side, a carbine in his hand, and a measure of grog within reach. These men, hurt in the

wars, were maintained at the public cost, in every sense of the word; for, at the division which succeeded each cruise, a certain part was set aside "to keep," so it was registered, "their seams calked and their timbers good."

"Ha, Johnny Martin!" said one, holding out his hand, "all safe and sound yet—no American marlinspike's fired upon you by the bushel, as was the case when I lost my precious limb—all the better for you, my lad."

"I say, Jack," exclaimed another, "any hard muzzle to muzzle work now, my boy?—yardarm to yardarm, as when we demolished the Santissima Trinidad? No blood in the scuppers now: the spunk's gone out of the sea this one time, and it bears nothing but sucking babies."

"Why, Jack, my lad," growled a third, "the gold seems to have flown from the Indies of late: no rich prizes—no barges laden to the hawseholes with silver, eh!"

"What are you seadevil's bantlings bothering about now?" exclaimed the stern voice of the captain from within. "Damme! a fellow might as well sleep when Neptune's making his billows dance to the tune of a nor'wester."

Martin found Corsbane seated in all his glory, in a very splendid apartment, which had once served as a hall of audience to the governors of that portion of the isle. He was reclining on a couch of figured silk, stuffed with the odorous rind of some elastic plant, which answered to all his motions, like whalebone, and was soft without being warm. He was attired in loose trousers of damasked satin; his waistcoat, of the same materials, was unbuttoned, to display cambric of the finest texture, wrought on the bosom with lace, and inlaid with diamonds and pearls: the button which fastened it at the throat was of one stone, and of great value. Over the whole was worn a morning gown of white silk, curiously wrought with flowers, and not without skill, though rather large and gaudy. His head was bare, and nothing of the rough, bold, blunt mariner appeared, save his cutlass and a brace of pistols in his belt, and which he allowed no one's hand, save his own, to come near.

The casements were open for the free admission of air—if air could have been had on such terms, where not a breath was stirring; but what could not be got from nature was supplied by art; for while two handsome young negresses sprinkled odorous waters about the apartment, two others, still more handsome, stood fanning him with large fans of wild birds' feathers, as vivid as rainbows. These sooty sultanas wore slight bodices of blue silk, buttoned down the bosom with agates, but not so closely as to conceal the skin, which was smooth and glossy as polished marble; while kirtles, of a lighter colour, reached scrimply to the knee, allowing their legs, which were worth looking at for their

neatness, to be visible to the ankles. They chanted a low sweet air, to which their fans kept time.

"Deil hae me," said Davie Gellock, "but this coves a'! This maun be a sort o' supplemental paradise, into which they admit black angels."

"That's not amiss, damme!" said Corsbane. "Why, Martin, this fellow has some marrow in him. I'm glad you're come: I have been obliged to use the ratan a little more than is pleasant for this right arm of mine—my plantation is run wild, by God! I left four overseers, and now I can find but two; yet no one has heard of them, or seen them: they are hidden in the earth, that's certain." Here the four negro handmaiden's looked to each other, and laughed. "Why, damme! you dark Dalilahs, do you know what is become of them? Speak out—you, Miss Midnight, with all your stars, answer me! Silent, are you; this will make you speak!" He snatched a pistol from his belt as he spoke, cocked it, and said in a slow peremptory tone, "Where's Will Gunnion?"

The girl to whom this was spoken was now kneeling on one knee; and though she heard the lock of the pistol click as it was cocked, and saw the muzzle within six inches of her bosom, she neither trembled nor shrunk, but answered with great serenity, "Sailed for London."

"Sailed for London! in what ship? Come—"

"In the Sally in our Alley, massa."

"The Sally! Why, not one word has Craven and Company spoken to me about his voyage."

"'Cause, massa," said her companion negress, "they mayn't have found him yet."

"Ha! Madame Lignumvitæ, so you know of this matter, too? Found him yet! why, you fool, he was not packed in one of the hogsheads—the fellow has absconded. I'll have him, if he keeps above ground."

"Oh!" said Miss Midnight, with a smile, "Massa Gunnion would lie in Massa Corsbane's bed; so Massa Gunnion was packed in Massa Craven's hogshead, and sent to learn manners in London. Him no tarve—him have sugar, and sugar is sweet."

"Damme!" said Corsbane, with a hoarse laugh, "that's doing the matter neatly. Well, I don't greatly blame you. But harkee, my black brimstones, don't be in such a hurry to barrel up a Christian again, lest I send you to sea with a hundred weight of lead at each foot to help you to swim back to your own dusty country. Now where's Tom Jeffery? you must know, Martin, that Tom's missing too, and that not a soul can tell me a word about him: he went out one fine morning, and didn't return at night. Come, my dark Dalilahs, tell me what is become of Tom?"

The four negresses remained silent; they looked at each

other, and they looked at Captain Corsbane, but opened not their lips. "Come, show your pearls, my dears," said the captain, "silence won't do; you haven't packed up Tom too in a barrel, and marked him for transportation, eh?"

"No, massa," said Miss Midnight, "him beat one, two, three, four negroes, and they drown him in a mashtub, and burn him to dust and scatter him on the winds, and bid him tell him's God to put him more wisely together again."

"Damnation!" exclaimed Corsbane, unsheathing his cutlass like lightning, and seizing the negress by a handsome handful of hair, which, according to the practice of her tribe, she had gathered together, and braided and ornamented with a string of pearls, the gift of the hand which now clutched it. It is probable that he intended only to shear off this lock, with his cutlass; but she resisted, and he became enraged, and ere any one could interfere, he severed, not only the lock, but a portion of the scalp, and throwing it bloody on the floor, said, "There! that's my way of punishing unwilling witnesses—I shall know who the four were who murdered poor Tom Jeffrey before to-morrow's sun is risen."

"You may not live to see it," exclaimed a voice, soft as the sweetest music; "I learned it from one of your island poets, to question all mortal dependance on the future:

'Where is to-morrow? In another world.'

Do what thou desirest to do to-day, lest thou live not to look upon to-morrow."

"It is Cunahama, the sorceress!" said one of the negresses, with a shudder, "and massa will know all." Cunahama advanced halfway up the hall, and then paused: she was in the bloom of youth, and very beautiful. Though come of the all but extinct line of princes of South America, such was the fine proportion of her limbs, such the elegance of her form, and such the wild lustre of her eyes, that she might have stood with two of the loveliest dames of Europe in the presence of a painter or sculptor, and contributed more graces to art than both. Her dress was of cotton fantastically emblazoned with flowers, and birds, and beasts, and fishes, and which, with the exception of her short kirtle and loose mantle, sat close to her body, displaying rather than hiding her person. We have only to add that her hair, long and black, was platted and wound about her head, with permission for two locks to hang gracefully down behind, and that she held in one hand a young plantain pulled up by the roots, and all that is necessary is said about her appearance.

"What bedlamite is this?" inquired Captain Corsbane of a couple of negro servants, "and what does she want?"

"Nothing," was her answer. "The sweet flowers are my bed; the sweet winds of heaven lull me asleep; the stars watch over me; I wake, and drink of the delicious cocoa-nut; I eat of the luscious fruits; the spirits of my race and the gods of my land are nigh me; and I have nothing to ask of man—but I may have something to tell him."

"And what have you to tell me? But come nearer—I did not think that the old race had such a jewel among them—come nearer."

"I can come close," said Cunahama, "for I am charmed beyond thy power, and dread thee not; but I must be brief. What return should I make to the Christian for seizing all the mighty kingdoms which pertained to my ancestors, and for having slaughtered or enslaved their people? Come, answer me."

"Why, damme!" said the captain, "I suppose I must allow you to hate us pretty cordially. Come, my pretty maiden, will that do?"

"I cannot hate the image of God, though it be impressed on worthless clay," she replied. "No, I come to return good for evil; I come to tell you what will be your fate—a fate only to be avoided by more wisdom than the white men of this great isle possess. Shall I say on? I have spoken elsewhere in vain."

"Oh, say on, by all means," said Corsbane—"only don't make the yarn of prophecy long—I have a couple of murders to inquire into, and one or more slaves to put in the way to be hanged—Mungo—Cæsar—devil! don't leave the hall, I must have some talk with you anon." The negroes glanced at each other, muttered something, and obeyed.

"The crimes of the Christians," said Cunahama, "have grown so terrible in the eyes of the gods, that they will take away their power and bestow it on those whom they have enslaved, insulted, and beaten—whose flesh they have torn with pincers, and whose locks they have plucked, nay—God of heaven!—flayed from their heads." She lifted the handful of platted hair with all its diamonds and pearls, to which was attached the gory scalp, and said, "As sure as that will no longer grow on the head of the unhappy one to whom it belonged, so as surely shall the sway of this mighty isle be taken fiercely and bloodily from you, and black faces shall rule where white faces have ruled too long." She waved her hands when she had done speaking, and turned to be gone.

"Stop!" exclaimed Captain Corsbane—"I must have some more talk with you—I must spin a little yarn of my own, damme!"

"You accept my warning, then," exclaimed the prophetess—"much blood will be spared—but no, you are hardened, and may not—I already hear the shrieks of the women; the

cries of the murdering babes. See! the walls of this chamber are dappled with gore; blood is flooding the floors—a banner is displayed—a white babe writhing on a pike—ha! the grim faces of ten thousand demons are smiling below it.”

“Who told you to say all this?” inquired Corsbane.

“One whom you know not, and will never see—the God who protects my race. Did I not foretell to the white faces what has since befallen France, and did they not all mock me? How many laughed loud when I told Rose de Pagerie that she would become the empress of the earth, and will she not? Nay, I could read thee thy own fate, were thy name not too despicable to mingle with the names of the good and great.”

“It is true,” said an English servant, “that Cunahama foretold the French revolution; and also said to bonnie Rose Pagerie, that she would be an empress; but then she said that I would die in the air. I cannot believe her, not I.”

“Why now I begin to credit her,” said Corsbane; “but what in the fiend’s name is she after now?—why she looks so close as if the young man’s character were written on his face!”

Morison Roldan, hitherto unseen by the prophetess, had slipped inch by inch forward, attracted by her denunciations; as she turned round, her eyes fell upon him. She perused his face with much attention; then seizing his arm, by a vehement effort placed him on the seat of rule, pulling Corsbane away, and pushing him back among the domestics. “This youth was born for rule—thou art born but to obey: bright days will be his—dark days will be thine. I have said it, and so will it happen.” Before Corsbane could recover his seat, or get the better of his astonishment, Cunahama had left the hall, and crossing the stream, was seen hastening on her way to another plantation, there to utter, and utter in vain, what she called her warning voice.

“I understand all this, perfectly well,” said the captain. “I shall hold a court of examination here to-morrow; and I doubt not to have the happiness of helping half a dozen of those handy fellows, who pack white men in sugar-casks and drown them in mash-vats, to a high gibbet and a sure noose.”

“A word with you, captain,” said Jack Martin, “a word in your ear. I have no wish to curry favour, or to be thought to be busy; but wouldn’t it be a very pretty precaution against any outbreak of these black devils, to bring up a couple of carronades and plant them in the mount?—they carry very handy pomegranates, and take a fellow’s part in earnest, when he kens how to use them.”

Corsbane rubbed his chin, and with a feather fan kept cooling one of his handmaidens instead of himself. “Tis no bad thought,” he said; “yet what have we to dread? It

shall never be said that Dick Corsbane shook at the ravings of one of those cursed copperskins. No, Jack, keep the caronades where they are, my lad; but it can do no harm to be ready should you be wanted: I will hang out the old flag, or throw up three blue lights an I want you—so begone for the present. But, I say, come back to-morrow, at ten o'clock, there will be some work for the whip; we shall see what colour the blood of some of these sooty scoundrels is."

Away went Martin, taking Davie with him, but not before the latter had whispered to Morison, "My cousin says he has something in steep for us, sae let him work out his ain way; the adder gangs mair crooked to the mark than the hawk."

The captain motioned his dark Dalilahs, as he called them, out of the room, and also his negro footmen, and desiring Morison to approach, he thus accosted him: "Well, what do you think on't, my handy lad—swallowed it all like sweet milk, damme!—don't know those saucepan-faced furies so well as I do—they cannot come the queer over me—no, Dick Corsbane's too old a cat to draw that straw before."

"If you allude," answered Morison, "to the words of that poor savage, it is needless to ask me what faith I have in the ravings of one whom oppression, perhaps, has driven mad. She seems to dread some outbreak among the black population of the isle; and I should not wonder at it, no one would willingly remain a slave."

"Ay, damme! I believe you there," said the captain; "but then what can we do! Slaves are permitted, I had nearly said commanded, by Scripture; I am sure at least that they are commanded by nature; how the devil could we go on with our plantations if it were not for those two-footed oxen, that toil and sweat for their masters! The men work for us, and the women, when they are handsome, cheer us; and what more would they have!"

Morison smiled and said, "The taste of the Christian settlers seems strange; why, with all the luxuries of the earth and sea at command, do you not lay out your affections, or your money, on the bright eyes and alabaster skins of the dames of Europe."

"You talk like a child," said the other; "the blue-eyed, bright-locked, lily-skinned lass of old Scotland, will frisk it up to the ankles in snow, and salute you with burning lips on an iceberg. But bring her away from her mountains—her flesh falls from her—her roses fade—the fire of her eye is extinguished, and she is fit for nothing but to watch, and scold, and be peevish about her poor husband, when he comes refreshed from sea, and smiles to behold these black buxom beauties, savory as their own tropical fruits."

Morison answered, "This isle is swarming with men in whose looks we may read of two races; they have the ferocity of the savage, and the skill of the European. I have

seen some dozen of them on my way hither; I could read hatred in their looks: the time will come when such men will be resistless."

"Oh, damme! you are observant too, I see," exclaimed Corsbane; "we must look to it. Go for the present; walk over all the nunnery grounds, but war-hawk! if you venture farther, no good will come of it: here no one can steal away from his master without being caught, we are all linked in one chain."

Morison went into the open air; the burning heat of the day was gone; a gentle wind moved the orange groves and the lime trees; while the sun from the summit of the interior mountains, shot a long and level beam which seemed to set the hill-tops in a flame, burn off the heads of the towering palms; and even to communicate fire to the restless waves of the boundless ocean. He looked at the strange structure out of which he had just come, and could not help perceiving in its various parts, the characters or its different occupiers; the Spaniard desirous of splendour; the Englishman anxious for comfort; and both solicitous about security. On going to the stream which enclosed it, he observed that the bank was armed with a line of sharpened stakes, which presented their pike heads against all who should attempt to pass the water; and he also found here and there pieces of artillery planted, where the passage seemed easy. But what struck him most, was the apparition of an aged mulatto, who stepped as he stepped; looked where he looked; stopped when he stopped; and when on one occasion he laid hold of the chevaux-de-frise and gave it a shake, his sable attendant brought down a brass carabine which he carried to the level, and appeared disposed to draw the trigger.

Morison, on reaching a secluded place, turned round suddenly on this unwelcome comrade, and demanded why he followed him. "Ask Massa Corsbane," was the reply; and such was the answer, too, to all questions asked, till he inquired who Cunahama was. "Would have been a queen, but for those snow-skinned devils; but her time's coming."

"She is a very handsome woman," said Morison, "and speaks the language of other lands with no little elegance; her words are clear and pointed, yet she is mad, is she not?"

"Not so mad as you are, young man," said the mulatto, changing his manner and his language in a moment—"not so mad as you are for allowing yourself to be brought here and abiding when you are brought."

"Well, friend," said Morison; "let me put your words to the test: suppose now that I lay my hand on these pike-heads and overleap them, you are placed where you are to shoot me, are you not?"

The mulatto laughed, "Ay, shoot at you!" said he, "but not hit you unless I like; yet there are many ways that a

willing mind may find of escape, without putting me to the trouble of firing awry, a feat which I cannot always do when I wish; for a fair mark and a handy weapon are tempting things."

"And do you believe now in the predictions of this island queen of yours?"

The mulatto looked all round and then replied, "Not always! for sometimes it is the pleasure of Cunahama to mislead, and that she accomplishes by prophecy with a two-fold meaning; but at other times the spirit so presses on her that she is obliged to speak, and then she tells truth as surely as the sun diffuses warmth."

"We have prophetesses and seers in my land," said Morison, "to whom future events are revealed in a shadowy way."

"I have heard of them," said the mulatto, with almost breathless interest—"I have heard of them. Old Captain Macracken who lived in the nunnery knew them and believed in them; they lived on the hills, and in the misty isles, and what happened in far lands was revealed to their sight in visions. Can you tell me more of them?" And he set the butt end of his carbine on the ground, and looked into the face of Morison with an eye of pressing entreaty.

"I can," said Morison promptly: "I have the blood of seers in my veins. Look through that tartan silk, and tell me what you see."

As he said this, he unbound his silk handkerchief, and held it between him and the distant hills: long and anxiously the mulatto looked; at last he said, "I see nothing but what I daily see."

"Then let me look;" Morison turned east, west, north, and south, and said, "I see, old man, the banks of the stream which encircles this mound thronged by dark and angry faces; there are spears brandished, torches shaken, and carbines levelled: I see flames ascending from town and plantation—white faces flying pale, and swarthy ones hurrying in blood after."

The mulatto bowed his head, and muttering, "He knows it, he knows it!" retired to his usual distance; while Morison, having hazarded the prophecy from what he had heard and seen, sat down under a wild fig tree, and fell asleep; a welcome sleep, brought by the sultriness of the day and his own waste of spirits and thought.

After a two-hours' slumber he started up, hastened into the hall, and in an inner room found Captain Corsbane in fuller glory than he had hitherto seen him. Champagne bottles were strewn empty about the floor, and on his right and left, and before and behind, sat or flitted about his dark Dailahs, as he loved to call his female attendants, while the remoter corners were occupied by four mulatto musicians,

who now and then threw in a touch or two of an island air, to the increase of discord, as Corsbane said, when he silenced them, in the middle of the Marsellois hymn of Hispaniola. All present seemed to have attended more to wine than to sweet sounds: the captain was in what he called his third heaven; his sable sultanas unsteady to reeling: their head-dresses were awry, and their scanty clothing disarranged; but had they been dressed ever so decorously, they were not likely to continue so within reach of hands that were for ever pulling or pushing them.

"Ha! my fellow voyager," exclaimed the captain, when he saw Morison; "so you have been looking at my defences, damme! 'Twould not do, youngster: 'twill be wise in ye to keep quiet, and abide within doors too: a bullet may make a mistake and stay you else. Better remain with me, and take what goods the gods provide; some wine, eh? Come, clean cap out, as you say in Galloway, where the grapes are sour as sloes; that'll do. Oh! I'd forgot; you have high blood in your veins, and wine is congenial: so take another cup. Here's Lord Roldan's health; you know whom I mean; of all men he's the rummest; never could, for the soul of me, make him out. If I were kind to you he might be angry—and his anger reaches round the earth—and were I to be unkind, he might be angrier still: damme, that's a poser!"

Morison tasted, but did not drink: he held the cup in his hand, and drawing near the captain, waited an opportunity to speak.

"Play up, you sooty musicians, and dance, you died in grain devils, and let this son of a lord see your shapes: he shall marry the handsomest of you, damme! it's all one to Dick Corsbane."

Up started the four handmaids, and loud played the four musicians.

"Now say what you have to say, lad," said Corsbane, "and speak low; I see something in your eye."

Morison whispered, "An attack, from what quarter I know not, an attack will be made on this house: the palisades are all but sawn through in one or two places; and more, I can both see and hear that your mulattoes and negroes are in the secret."

"A likely thing, my young master, a likely thing that what has escaped the eyes and ears of Dick Corsbane, as they call me to windward, should be found out by a milksop! No, confound me, that's too much! you want to draw the black clout over my eyes; but it won't do. Here, you grim Dalilah: this soft sugar cane here, this nut not come into milk yet, says you dance to the one side; show him, I say, that your flat feet can move more truly to the music than his own."

A sooty hand and arm were stretched out, and Morison, obeying the impulse of the music, danced with such ease and grace as obtained the applause of the audience, male as well as female.

At one of the pauses of the music, while Corsbane was emptying another bottle of Champagne, and Morison was praising his dark partner for the soul and heart which she lent to all her movements, she whispered, "Small birds hide when the hawk is in the air; little mouse runs away from the hall about to take fire; but the rat," and she looked at Corsbane, "bides still and is burnt. You hear, you understand! Have you no mother that loves you, that you stay to be stabbed?"

He looked in her face, and her large dark eyes seemed swimming in fire; he was about to answer, when the crack of carbines broke the stillness of the night; they were in a moment replied to by a dozen or more of muskets, and by a yell so wild and startling, that the birds flew from their roosts, for a mile around.

Two out of the four old sentinels—and they were bleeding—came halting in, and one cried, "All the devils in hell are come to pay us a visit: and we shall be butchered first and then burnt to cinders. Hast no brandy, captain, to put a bit of spirit in an old stick? Champagne, curse Champagne! I must die without drink. I did not think so once neither." And reloading his carbine, he limped to the window, and, taking aim, fired: some one groaned and fell.

Corsbane was silent, but not idle. At the first report of the musketry he started up and flew to a recess which communicated with the top of his dwelling, and firing a pistol, in a moment three deep blue lights, flashing far up into the heavens with a hissing noise, brightened hill and tree, and threw over the lagoon where the Wildfire lay a flash so vivid that every eye winked below it.

"Coming," cried Jack Martin; and harnessing a carronade, departed for the scene of action, accompanied by his Cousin Davie, and five or six armed comrades. "He's but a kittle colt, the captain," said Martin, "to ride the water on; but he's in a strait, and it's my duty to help him."

"If it werna for Morison," said his cousin, "I wadna gang my foot length. Dod! they might cut the captain into slices, and eat him in sandwiches for me; an' that's likely to be his fate and mony a dry cheek. But an' I lose Morison, its ten to ane but I'll gang mad, and shoot all and sundry that had a hand in tearing him away."

"Be quiet, cousin, be quiet," said Martin: "let pistol and carbine speak to-nigh. Now we are nigh the nunnery, let us force the gate at once, and brush in."

The moment Corsbane had made the signal for assistance, he hastened out to see the number of his foes, and their mode

of attack. Upward of two hundred armed negroes and mulattoes were attempting to cross the stream, while fifty and more covered their advance with a shower of balls, which, though fired at random, had already wounded two or three of the garrison, if seven white men may be called such, for the mulattoes and the negroes inside were all enemies to a man; nor were the women otherwise, though at first none of them dared to act openly, from a dread of Corsbane's pistols, which they knew he could use quick and unerringly. To direct a swivel loaded with balls on the mob of assailants was but a moment's work: they had removed the palisades—treacherously sawn to aid the attack—and were half seen above the bank when the match was applied, and balls, scattering as thick as hail, killed a dozen of the foremost, and wounded twice as many.

This, so far from daunting the leaders, rather kindled them into rage and desire of revenge: they had expected to find Corsbane in his revels, and to have an easy conquest. They shouted out "Blood! blood!" and pushed into the stream a second time, while the cry which they raised was re-echoed from a plantation half a mile distant, and immediately a column of flame, accompanied by clouds of smoke as black as tar, rose with a rushing sound into the still pale night, proclaiming to all who witnessed it that the insurgents had succeeded in destroying a neighbour mansion, and might be expected in a few minutes to strengthen the attack on the nunnery.

"Now, saints—if there be saints, have mercy on our souls—if we have souls," exclaimed the captain, "for these born devils will have none; it's no sin at least to shoot them, danime!" and taking aim, along with other defenders, as he spoke, shot three of the leading mulattoes dead, and wounded two more.

At this moment the clatter of horses' feet was heard, and the rattling of wheels. Martin forced his way in at the bridge, and took a position to rake the advancing column. "Damme, Jack," exclaimed Corsbane, "but this is friendly!" As he uttered these words, the negress, whom he called Miss Midnight, glided nigh: a dagger gleamed—the next moment she withdrew it reddened in his blood. "It won't do though, or curse me!" exclaimed Corsbane, prostrating her with a blow of his cutlass: "and yet I felt the cold steel nigh my liver, too."

The carronade and the musketry swept away masses of enemies, but more came pouring to the attack on all sides, and the resistance was fierce, though it promised to be in vain.

"Jack," said Corsbane, wringing his hand, "it looks black; but I'll live to thank you for what you have done—ay! and thank Dempster, too, for what he has not done; I have a

trick of my own, which none of these black devils are aware of; but don't follow me, for that will ruin us all; cut your way back to the Wildfire, and if I'm not visible on the day after to-morrow, then think Dick Corsbane has forgot himself—but not that he's dead, damme! Farewell."

"Davie, cousin Davie," said Martin, "turn the horses' heads shipward again, and let us make our way back; this place is growing too hot for us, all the black deevils of Hispaniola are here." Morison kept in the rear, with one or two of the firmest of the mariners: he had hitherto taken no part in the fray, though he was armed, and ready to resist should he be attacked; no one, however, seemed disposed to injure him. The old mulatto sentinel had possessed all with the belief, that it would not only be impossible to harm him, but would ruin their cause; nor had the words of Cunahama been uttered for him in vain. It was known, too, or at least surmised, that he was a prisoner, and likely to be sold as a slave: in revenging their own wrongs, therefore, they naturally spared him; though the spear was often levelled to run him through and the carbine cocked to shoot him. As all eyes were turned on the nunnery, and all thoughts on Captain Corsbane, Martin repassed the bridge without opposition, and gained the open way to the lagoon, distant some half-mile. He halted to see the upshot.

"I canna for the soul of me surmeese," said he, "what Dick meant by bidding me make my way back to the Wildfire, for he had a trick of his own, unknown to all mankind. Od! if he escapes now, I'll be inclined to worship him, he's no a man, he's a divinity." The flash of musket and pistol continued to brighten the trees and the windows; the captain and two chosen comrades had retired to the house; the negroes and mulattoes poured into the entrance like a flood, their yells filling all the air, and making, as Davie Gellock said, "his banes and blude to creep and grue." Suddenly the smell and hiss of a sulphurous fuse was felt and heard; the building, from dome to foundation-stone, was lifted into the air; and as it dropped, a roar louder than even tropical thunder, shook it to atoms, while smoke and flame burst out on every side, and strewed the mound with shattered bodies.

"If Captain Corsbane survives that, he'll outlive the last day," exclaimed Martin: "I'm glad he didna invite me to this concluding entertainment of his; but come, we maun get into the Wildfire, and warp her out of the lagoon; the blood of these fiends is up, and they'll stick at naething." So saying they regained the ship, lifted her anchor, and favoured by a gentle wind, shot out to the open sea, which was reddened for many miles by the conflagration.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

BURNS.

THE scene which we have so briefly described was the outburst of that great and terrible revolution, which, after a vast waste of life, concluded by transferring the splendid isle of Hispaniola from the rule of the whites to the sway of the blacks. For some time the storm, which ended in a shower of blood, had been gathering: the love of freedom, natural to man, had never been wholly extinguished in the bosoms of those unhappy persons who, for the unlimited and unrestrained range and enjoyment of the African wilds, had been compelled to accept the condition of slaves, under rigorous masters in a distant land, while the mulatto race, bringing the knowledge of the European to the craft and ferocity of the African, diffused in every direction a spirit of resistance to slavery, and a desire of enjoying the blessings of a free condition. Among such a body the decree of liberty and equality promulgated by France and addressed to the colony, fell like fire upon a powder magazine: they claimed their new rights; the colonists hesitated: the incensed negroes and mulattoes flew to arms, and with loud cries assailed the homes of their masters: fire filled all the air; blood died all the earth: the fainting Europeans were oppressed by numbers; and the whole isle, save here and there a fortress, was

"With sable faces thronged and fiery arms."

"I have long looked for this," said Martin, "and now, since the brute has got the bridle out of its mouth, it will play sad pranks wi' its heels. It's just as weel that we are in this bit crooked timmer, and sailing on the bosom of the sea—the land will be owre hot soon for a white face, I jalousie." As he said this, flames burst suddenly out from a mansion which stood close to the side of the bay, and the terrified inmates, as they rushed into the open air, were cut down by a band of negroes and mulattoes, who, bearing a white infant on the point of a lance, urged the extermination of the whole race of taskmasters. The light of the moon and stars, and the grosser light of the conflagration, enabled Morison and his companions to see all that passed without being within reach of shot themselves. "I would like to

help some of these poor whites—Frenchmen though they be,” said Martin; “but landing is out of the question; they would cut us up like peelings of ingans.”

Morison looked earnestly on the scene as the ship glided silently along. “See!” he said, “these fierce wretches are on their way to that plantation: cannot you sail nearer, and give the house the protection of your guns?”

“Ye speak like an older man,” replied Martin; “I wonder how I overlooked that; but I am sae accustomed to be directed, that I think I’ll soon forget how to direct myself.”

The mansion to which this referred stood on a neck of land that extended into the sea: gardens and orchards lay around it, and lines of splendid palms and cabbage trees, and wild figs and oranges, with others for shade or for fruit, enclosed it as with a garland. The proprietor seemed to have taken the alarm, for the windows towards the land were barricaded, and marksmen, though few in number, might be observed in ambush among the groves, for the purpose of firing upon the advance of the insurgents. The Wildfire, sounding as she proceeded, was at last able to approach the neck of the promontory, but her guns had been brought but partially to bear, when the mulattoes made a rush, and exchanging a few shots with the defenders, flowed round the house like an inundation, and assailed it—door and window. But the four-pounders of the Wildfire, loaded with musketballs, and the rifles of the whites, appeared to promise a victorious defence, when treachery within accomplished more than the fire without: a sudden light flashed up on all sides: yell after yell arose from the assailants; and in a moment the house was in a bright flame.

Morison, who had gone for a few minutes below, now appeared on the deck, with a brace of pistols in his belt, a cutlass in his hand, and a light—fierce and steady—in his eyes. “Cannot we move her nearer?” he said to Martin; “or stay, David, make ready the boat—those who own that house are about to need all the aid we can give them.”

“We will a’ be right now,” said Davie to his cousin—“we’ll a’ be right now—since Morison has put his hand till’t: his head’s aye clear when other folk’s heads are puzzled.”

This was partly said while the boat was lowering. Morison sprang into it, followed by Martin and four others, and pulled towards a landing-place, partly screened by flowering shrubs, which fronted the house. “Now follow me,” he said, and, leaping ashore, had taken one or two steps when a young man, accompanied by a lady somewhat stricken in years, came running along the lawn; Morison hurried forward to aid them.

The insurgents fell for a moment back, and the lady and her son were nigh the boat when they rallied and returned.

from the decks of the Wildfire thinned the ranks of the mattoes, and checked their pursuit.

When they reached the ship, the Frenchman extended his right hand, in which he held papers, and laying his left on his bosom, clutching still the pistol of which he had made good use, said, "Gentlemen of England, Camille Regnault thanks you in the name of the French republic, one and indivisible, for saving the life of one of her representatives."

"You be damned!" said Martin; "who the hell covets the thanks of a spider-shanked Johnnie Crapand; I wad take na thanks for saving a thousand sic vermin, any more than I wad for no drowning a bagfu' o' weasels."

"You are facetious, sir," said Camille, bowing. "Your nation delights in giving hard words, and in doing kind actions; but the thanks which you refuse will be accepted by this young man; on his front nature has written gentleman."

"Ou atweel," said Martin; "he's owre young to discover the value of your grimaces and bowing, and pardonna moyes. I ken them weel: I will believe a Frenchman nae farther than I can fling him, and that canna be far joust now, for I shouldna wonder but I have a shot-hole that wants caiking about me. I thought my shoon were fou o' water, but I see it's blood—look how I gae plaunshing. Here, Andrew Roome, and you, Sandie Bryce, wyse the Wildfire a wee thocht off the shore, and then ane o' ye come to me. I'm rad; I'm waur hurt than I at first trowed."

When the two mariners flew to fulfil these orders, the Frenchman approached Martin, where he sat on a carronade, and said, "The gentlemen—the citizens, I should say—of the French republic, one and indivisible, are not ignorant in what is valuable more than in what is honourable; and if you will permit me to look at your hurts, I may do something for them; for I have studied—"

Here Camille paused in his speech, and, with Martin's approbation, examined his thigh. He turned grave as he looked, for there was a deep wound in the fleshy part, from which the black blood descended in clotting drops. He took out a small case of instruments, and, with gentle hands, examined the wound with a silver probe. His face brightened: "Aha!" he said, "this a steel wound, not a base lead one—and here is the ointment that will cure it."

"Avast! Frenchman," said Martin; "my thigh seems seething in fire already. Dod! if your cerate is no of a cooling kind, keep it awa frae me."

Camille smiled, as he said, "Cool! Ah, it would cool the everlasting fire itself. There! Now, ease, and sleep, and abstinence from liquor, and you are a man again."

"Frenchman!" cried the other, grasping his hand, and wringing it till the silver probe fell from between his finger

and thumb, "you are a gude fellow; and should the chance o' war ever bring ye near my cutlass, I'll turn its edge on other twa, afore I'll turn't on you."

The morning now broke; the sun got up at once, and ocean and isle lay bright around. The mountains of Hispaniola, the vales, the winding outline of its beautiful coast; the air that breathed above, and the flowers that bloomed below, seemed all the same as yesterday, and unconscious that the worms which crawled on its surface had undergone a change of condition. The banner of France had been plucked from tower and battery, and a thick and smouldering smoke arose in its stead. Houses had changed masters: the new occupier, smeared with blood, and half drunk, sat or walked with unsteady steps over the marble pavements or cedar floors; eyed his grim visage and woolly locks in the huge mirrors around, while the late occupier, stabbed, strangled, or shot, lay with his wife, and perhaps his children, on the threshold—objects of brutal jest or barbarous song to the wretches who reigned in their place. Every bay was moving with boats, into which fugitives were crowded or crowding, and as far as the eye could reach the negro and the mulatto reigned and ruled.

Camille looked earnestly on the sinuous coast, and on the villages and plantations, and exclaimed, "Ah! liberty, thou art a lovely thing in France—beloved France—but here thy aspect is grim and hideous."

"Ye may say that," said Martin, "fules shoudna have chappin sticks; but what shall we do next? He whom I served has found a grave amid the blazing rafters of his own habitation; but I shall wait a day and a night for him. I bit my thumb on that, and as he was aye true to me, so shall I be true to him—damme, that's but fair."

"When ye take up Corsbane's command," said Davie, "if ye could drap his practice of swearing it would be a' the better: ye are already arming yourself wi' his superfluous dammes—it's no bonnie."

Morison, having washed the stains of the fight from his hands and face, came upon deck. He was warmly welcomed by Camille, and assured of his own and his country's gratitude. "I came here," he said, "with my two colleagues, to say to the people of Hispaniola—the black, the brown, and the white—be free; but no sooner did I disenthral their bodies than I unloosed their passions and armed their hands; and lo! bloodshed and fire have ascended from hell when liberty descended from heaven. There, in these papers, now spotted with blood, are contained the outlines of a great republic, which I wished to establish in this magnificent isle. I had sat up much of the night framing it: the lights and the sounds which glimmered and echoed around me could not command me away from the great work; and I

was insensible of the horrific scene, when a stream of liquid fire burst into my study, and a face as grim as that of the fiend himself, said, 'Your mother and brother are both slain—how do you like it?' I snatched up a pistol, and I snatched up my draught of the new republic, and here I am, without a wound."

Morison felt an interest in Camille, and listened to all his observations about the state of society and the condition of mankind. Well acquainted with history, ancient as well as modern, Morison loved to follow the steps and read the achievements of the great conquerors of the older and latter times, yet his heart clung with a deeper throb to those heroic souls who had resisted oppression, and triumphed or fallen in defence of their country's independence. He had dreamed too with Plato—he had enjoyed the Utopian raptures of Harrington; and had heard, with a delight which he sought not to conceal, of the establishment of a vast republic in the magnificent continent of North America: but he was not quite prepared to hear of the change which had come on France—how she had, with one stern and fierce effort, thrown the atlas load of monarchy from her shoulders—had levelled all ranks and degrees of men, and offered to fight the battle of freedom for all the oppressed nations of the earth. He had heard rumours, indeed, of such things; but now Camille, who had been an actor in those terrible scenes, drew up the curtain, and displayed the whole brightly before him, exciting at once his wonder, his admiration, and regret.

"But how," said Morison, "could you fling off the burdens of old vassalage—the love which belongs to long lines of heroic names—the reverence due to a crowned head?"

"With me," said Camille, with a somewhat stern look, "the matter was made easy. My father was of noble birth; my mother was of the peasantry—in a word, I am what the law that I helped to abolish called basely born. By a lady of noble descent, whom he wedded, my father had another son, and as he was dying he desired to share his inheritance between us; my brother, who loved me exceedingly, and my stepmother, who loved me much, wished for this also, but the law and the etiquette of birth said nay, and I was made a beggar as well as a bastard. The storm came soon after which shook the monarchy and the aristocracy, and swept away the law which had been my enemy—and this is the right hand that helped to put them down."

Morison seized his hand, and shaking it with vehemence, exclaimed, "Thrice honoured be the hand that wrought such a deed!" and passing it to his lips, added, "Oh that I had been by your side—neither shot nor steel—nor kindled mines, nor the face of man should have turned me back—though every step had been on a crown or a coronet."

The Frenchman sat and looked at Morison as if he would have looked him through. "Sir," said he, "I am well acquainted with the character of the English, and I never before saw anything like heroic enthusiasm in their cold constant natures. They are a noble people, but not noble after the way of other men. Had your sword—used with such skill as I have seldom witnessed—not done deeds for me which showed you in earnest, I should have deemed this un-Englishlike rapture affected, nay, put on for the purpose of deception or of mockery."

"I am no Englishman, sir," said Morison, haughtily, "though the English are a people who may be safely named both for valour and virtue with any nation under the sun: I am one of an ancient people, to whom the French were long friends and the English merciless enemies—I am a Scot, and one of the humblest—for I too am basely born, and the law which allows me no share in a noble father's fortunes is yet unrepealed."

The Frenchman sprang to his feet—took Morison in his arms—kissed him on both cheeks, and exclaimed, "Be my brother—be my brother!—we shall, side by side, fight the battle of freedom against oppression—of natural right against usurped power—of those who hold the patent of their honours from Almighty God against those whom corruption has created—the earth must have a dynasty of intellectuals; she has too long endured the sway of the dunces."

Having uttered this, Camille strode up and down the deck, and muttered, "Ah! little do the tyrants of the earth know of the resolved hearts and resolute hands which their cruelties and oppressions have stirred up against them! It is time that we ceased to bow to wooden gods or worship idols, senseless and brainless, which occupy the high places."

His reverie was interrupted by Davie, who, laying his hand on the Frenchman's shoulder, said, "Ye have wonderful skill. Johnnie Martin is maist as weel as ever he was, and I wha got a clink or twa wi' a whinger, had a bit airm in the inside of my hat which kept it frae biting deep; but though I hae nae need o' yere hand, there's one below that wad be the better of a slight keelhauling—Morison saved him frae the deathstraik—but I'm rad, he's waur hurt than fleyed—at first I thought he was waur fleyed than hurt. Come."

Not a word—or more than a word—the Frenchman knew, but Davie seconded his speech by pulling with one hand and pointing with the other to the cabin; to which Camille good-naturedly descended, and was shown his youthful countryman laid on cushions on the floor and a lady holding his head, from whence the blood oozed through a thick bandage and stained her fingers. No sooner did he see them than he clasped them in his arms, exclaiming, "My mother—my

brother!—His name be blessed!—how were you saved? I was told you were murdered."

"Camille, my son," said the Lady Regnault, "we are not yet saved," and she turned her eyes, from which tears dropped fast, to the bandaged head of the youth in her arms.

"Mother," said Camille, "you know my skill—trust me;" he removed the bandage, and the blood gushed as he did so over his fingers. With gentle hands he washed and examined the wound. "It is very severe—but not dangerous—my brother is faint through loss of blood." While speaking he stanchd the bleeding; dropped a few drops of balsam into the wound, which soothed the burning heat; bound it neatly up: gave his brother a draught of cold water, into which he infused a juice from an herb which seemed but newly gathered; and the youth, greatly refreshed, looked up and smiled on his mother and Camille, put his hands in theirs, and composed himself as if desirous of sleep. Cushions were brought, he was laid at full length on them, and Camille, motioning to Lady Regnault, led her up to the deck, saying, "A few hours' sleep will be like a second physician to my brother. Now tell me how you escaped;" and he placed her on a seat, and sitting down at her feet, looked round as if desirous to have others to share his joy.

Lady Regnault laid her hand tenderly on Camille's head, and said, "Nature meant thee for my son, and as such have I ever found thee; and oh! when borne out of yon slaughter-house I thought the hand was thine which cleared the way to safety with the sword; but if not a Camille, he is worthy of Camille's friendship; for his nobleness of nature is of the highest, purest kind. Behold him—there he is: come hither, sir, that I may touch the hand with my lips that has done such deeds in the cause of humanity." The noble lady arose as she spoke, and with a graceful warmth and matronly simplicity, laid her arms around Morison's neck: kissed him on the right cheek and on the left, and placing him beside Camille, said, "Be brothers."

Martin and his comrades looked upon this scene, and screwed their seamed and weather-beaten countenances to something which they considered too hard and whipcordish for tears; but all would not do. "Confound the woman!" said Johnnie, "who the deevil would hae suspek't that she could hae come owre ane's heart and een in this queer gate? and Morison, too, a perfect born deevil, wi' an ee that wad kindle a strae, and a speerit that swooms uppermost of all things: him that no an hour syne—it's mair than that though—wi' a bent pistol in one hand and a twa-edged sword in the tither, raged through and through yon sooty ranks, damme! as Captain Corsbane says—said, it ought to have been, poor fellow, for he'll never cry damme mair. But what was I gaun to say? I hae made a burble in my yarn, I doubt."

"Atweel hae ye, cousin, or damme then ! as Captain Corbane says," exclaimed Davie ; " there' stwa things I wad counsel ye to desist frae—first drap a' the dammes ; I wadna that yere puir mither heard ye : she aye thought ye had a devout turn : and secondly, never attempt to account for either the words or actions of Morison Roldan—they are a' clean aboon the common ; I sometimes ca'na understand them mysel'."

A day and a night had been consumed in tacking to and fro, when Martin summoned his crew and passengers on deck, and said, that he had now no desire to abide on the coast of Hispaniola longer, and indeed he was surprised that the mulattoes had not before this armed their caravals, and attacked him. " Nothing," added he, " could have saved me but that bit coloured cloth flying in the breeze, blazoned with the marks of Old England ; and now, if I sail for France, this old rag will be my ruin—I shall lose ship and all it contains, for by this time she has declared war against England."

" Bravo, France ! bold France, beloved France—France one and indivisible !" exclaimed Camille. " Let the day be remembered in the history of freedom on which she raised her banner and pointed her spear against that old tyrant of the ocean."

" Moderate your warmth, young sir," said Martin ; " you don't know the French at sea, and I know what the British are on their natural element ; ay, and mair ! the first time they meet on old Neptune's green pastures, the French, one and indivisible, will be blown out of the water like peelings o' ingans, or damme then ! as the captain, poor fellow, said." And Martin halted from side to side of the deck ; hitched up his trousers ; handled his cutlass as if about to unsheath it, and muttered, " Should like to have a cut at the blasted frog-eaters—should like to come in among them at the breaking of the line—suspect we should take the starch out of the mounseers."

While this was passing, half a dozen large boats, full of armed men, came quietly along shore, screened from observation by a headland covered with palms and shrubs, which extended far into the sea on the left. No sooner did they burst round the extreme point than they all raised a loud shout, and made directly for the Wildfire, pointing their guns as they came, and yelling out, " Down with the white devils !"

Lady Regnault grew pale when she beheld this. " Alas !" she cried, as they approached, surveying them through a glass, " these are men whom I fed and pampered, and treated as brethren ; the mulatto in the foremost boat I made intendant of my estate—he was the first who armed himself against me : what will become of us !"

Martin smiled and said, "We shall see, my lady, we shall see. The Wildfire, as Dick Corsbane would have said, is not to be quenched by such thimblefuls of water as these black buckets bring; my Carron eagle will take a flee among these ravens presently; in the mean time, be so good as go below, and pray for us if you will—it's now the hour that my poor auld mither is on her knees, and it's just as well to hae some ane putting in a good word. Bide awee, Morison, my bairn, dinna point that carbine, it winna carry and do execution at this distance. Oh, I'll do up the grim rascals in fine style; only to think what sapskulls—to hae nae mair sense than row straight into the teeth of this great dragon of the deeps. Them make an empire! They havena brain fit to comprehend the mystery of a mousetrap, but I'll receive their fire first; they'll be sure to fire like all other savages, before they have a certainty of killing; besides, they may just be coming on a civil errand, and the Wildfire has blood enough to answer for already."

This speech was interrupted by a volley from the foremost boat; the balls rattled in the rigging and on the deck, and one of them hit Martin on the crown of his hat, while he was pointing a carronade.

"I kenned how it wad be; that bit lead was well aimed, and had the musket whilk it came from been fifty yards neger there might have been an inlake o' our crew! There now—gang and tell them they are only fit to be slaves." He applied the match to the gun, and a long stream of smoke and flame rushed towards the coming boats, accompanied by a roar and a yell that made the shores, on which the sun had now fully arisen, re-echo through every lagoon and cavern. In a moment the second carronade was pointed, but Martin withheld the match: the first shot had done its duty; three of the leading boats taken in a line were dashed to chips, the balls had scattered death among the others so effectually that they turned towards the land, while the sails of the Wildfire, catching the morning breeze, carried her away rapidly into the ocean: the hills of Hispaniola diminished and grew dim, and long before midday they appeared but as a mist, and, mingling with the sky, faded at last wholly from the view.

"Now for France, for lovely France!" exclaimed Camille, "and farewell for ever to the palm groves and wild fig trees and orange bowers of Hispaniola. It is necessary for diseases both bodily and political to let blood, and France, magnificent France! has done that even beyond my desire—but the white faces think before they act, while the black faces act, but never think."

"Blessed are they who expect little, for they are never disappointed!" said Martin. "I wad answer for nae nation under the sun, and for the French least of ony! they can but

eat, and drink, and dance, in a serious way: all things else they do as matters of amusement: I'll warrant they'll have nineteen republics, wi' as many variations as the song of Johnnie Cope, before the first year flies o'er their heads."

The young French nobleman recovered from his wounds, and, admonished by his brother, took the unobjectionable name of Citizen Regnault, while his mother, in conformity with the modified system of society in France, humbled herself into plain madame. "You are now on your way to our fatherland, madame," said Camille; "and it becomes us to appear like true and useful citizens; I shall accompany you to your fair estates on the beautiful Rhine, and then go to Paris, with an account for the people of my mission to their noble isle of Hispaniola. Ah! soon, soon will the great republic have the kings of the earth in league against it: the proud Austrian, the martial Prussian, and the barbarous hordes of the north, will all pour in upon us by land; while haughty England and bargaining Holland will assail us by sea. Ah! my friend Roldan, then will be the hour for a spirit such as your's to rise! Here birth gives place to merit, and the heroic soul ascends above meaner spirits as mercury ascends in sunshine."

Much did Camille say, and eagerly did Morison listen; his converse, while the voyage continued, was about republics, and the opening which a popular government offered to an intrepid mind. "I owe you my life," said Camille; "my mother and my brother owe you for theirs—they can pay you on the banks of the Rhine, I must pay you in Paris: there I am listened to; and those whom I delight to honour are welcomed with shouts and songs. War will, I know, be your choice. I can promise you a command in one of our frontier armies; your own genius will do the rest; but you must become a son of France."

"I can become the son of any land," said Morison, "for any claim that Scotland has upon me: yet against Britain arms I shall never bear, were I to become seven times over a son of France."

"I love you for that very sentiment, my brother!" replied Camille; "but I can place you where you will have no chance of encountering the lions of your native land. Already, on the extensive frontier of the republic, the armies of the northern kings are gathering—but we will hear more of this when we arrive on the Rhine—the rapid Rhine."

When the coast of France was reached the moon was up; lights gleamed far and wide from her towers and towns, and running in and anchoring in a little bay, the Wildfire disembarked her passengers, and also certain packages of spice, which, during his brief and adventurous voyage, Martin had contrived to obtain by purchase and by barter. "Here, friend," said Camille, "here is an order on the treasury of

the French republic for a sum equal to the profits of two honourable voyages. You have made me your friend by the bold and kindly way in which you have conducted yourself; but a word in your ear:" and he led Martin aside, and whispered with him for five minutes' space and more.

What he said to that worthy evidently discomposed him, for Jack broke off the conference in these rough words:—"I winna deny but I may hae done as ye say, and grabbed gowd frae Spain and silver frae France, and silks, and satins, and lace frae auld mither Holland. I hae done things I doubtna, for whilk my craig deserves a raxing—but may my soul become a kedge-anchor to Satan when he sails in his lake of brimstone, if I'll play the fetch and carry frae the isle that gae me birth; and mair nor that, the man who next proposes sic a course to John Martin had need to have his waistcoat stuffed wi' steel, lest my whinger and his moniplies get owre intimate."

"Davie," said Martin to his cousin, "when ye tire of fighting other fowk's fights, whilk yield little profit, ye'll likely find me in aye of the pleasant crooks of the Dee—wi a cozie house and a cow's grass—and if yere no made welcome, damme then! as Dick Corrbane said." With these words the cousins parted, and Camille and his companions began their journey to the banks of the Rhine.



LORD ROLDAN.

A ROMANCE.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Loosed to the world's wide range, enjoin'd no aim,
Prescribed no duty, and assign'd no name,
Nature's unbounded son, he stands alone,
His heart unbias'd and his mind his own.
Strong as necessity, he starts away,
Climbs against wrongs, and brightens into day.

SAVAGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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L O R D R O L D A N.

CHAPTER I.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are ranked ready,
The shouts of war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody.

BURNS.

On the third morning after making the coast of France, Camille arrived on the banks of the Rhine. It was the middle of harvest: on all sides—on vale and hill—Morison beheld the dark luscious clusters of the grape hanging as thick as he had ever seen sloes in his native vales, while labouring in pairs, like reapers, hinds and maidens were separating them from their trellises, and conveying them home to the wine presses, which were every where busy. A rich odour was diffused over the land, and there seemed gladness in every face: songs of tippling and true love were heard ascending from haugh and hall.

The mansion of the Regnaults—to Morison it looked a palace—occupied a bend of the river. As the noble lady and her sons entered their broad domains, she was instantly recognised by tenants and retainers, and such a cry of welcome rose as brought tears to her cheeks. When she found her foot on the marble floor, where for several years it had been a stranger, she knelt and kissed it; but on seeing the walls bare, her colour changed, and she cried, “Camille de Regnault, where are the portraits of thy ancestors; where are their shields and swords?”

“Madame,” said Camille, in a low voice, “compose yourself. A great change has come over mankind: France has now nothing that is old—all is new. She has honours for those who merit them, and for those who complain she has the—guillotine. Compose yourself—it is hard for you to endure, but I must warn you while I tell you, that the family pictures and archives of the noble house of Regnault were seized and burned—it was well that I was able to preserve the estates and palace of the family.”

At that moment a flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of other visitors; the aged domestics grew pale as they beheld the hairy crests and the tri-coloured pennants of a party of horse coming rapidly up the avenue. "Who owns this mansion?" exclaimed a rough loud voice; and springing down from his saddle, the speaker entered the hall, followed by a dozen inferior officers, who made their spurs jingle, and the steel scabbards of their swords beat time to their steps along the marble floor. "Who owns this mansion!—speak," said the leader; and he looked around to seek for some one on whom he could with some propriety affix that designation.

"I do," said Camille Regnault, coming forward; "what are your commands?"

"My commands are," said the officer, "that all to whom this place pertains do now make room for the soldiers of the republic; that all the horses belonging to this estate be employed in the public cause; that all the wine in the cellars and provisions in the hall be taken for the public service; that—"

"Stop, sir," said Camille, "you have used more words already than necessary. All that this mansion holds is at the service of the republic—go and say to General Beauharnois, and add that his friend Camille Regnault said it. Where is the general?"

The officer touched his helmet, but abated no jot of his rough dignity: "Great changes, citizen Regnault," said he, "have happened since you sailed to the west—changes which warrant fierce language; but do understand me," and he took Camille aside: "such language on my part is even necessary for the protection of the lady of Regnault. No one must be suspected—we must command roughly, she must submit pleasantly, else there is a general referee, called the guillotine, who settles all public disputes. But hark! that trumpet utters no French sound." He hurried out of the hall, and was mounted in an instant. Camille, from the summit of the castle, saw sufficient reasons for the officer's alarm. Large bodies of cavalry and masses of foot were advancing, while in the centre the mingled banners of Prussia and Austria announced the presence of highborn commanders—princes of the land.

Morison's colour rose as he looked on this dread array; he advanced to the verge of the parapet, and without seeming conscious that the stones were tottering under his feet, or that a sheer descent of a hundred feet yawned for him, looked eagerly for two minutes' space; then turning to Camille, said, "Where is the fiery cavalry of your country!—already they might have disputed the passage of yonder stream."

"They will not shun the combat," said Camille; "but our soldiers are but soldiers of yesterday, and yonder battalions are the veterans of the illustrious Frederick. But see, they

move off by their left. Chateau de Regnault will be spared to-day; so come, my friend, let us refresh ourselves, and choose horses and weapons, and then join the army of the republic. A great battle is about to be fought, and it will not be seemly for us to be absent."

"Ah, my children," said the Lady de Regnault, "strife and bloodshed is not confined to cruel Hispaniola; but here, at least, you will fight a fair fight; you will not slay men and women when you prevail, nor will you be hewn to pieces and consumed in your burning houses if you are vanquished. But what horses are these, Camille?"

"These are horses on which we must pay our respects to Beauharnois; have you your pistols in good order, Roldan? I must find a belt for that blade of yours—I could not find a better hand to wield it in all France." A mouthful of wine was hastily swallowed, and the two friends vaulted into their saddles, and accompanied by David Gellock and some dozen of armed retainers, rode forth. Lady Regnault stretched out her hands from her bower window, and exclaimed, "Bless you both, my children!—sure handsomer forms, or looks more knightly, never rode to the shivering of spears."

Morison turned to Davie and said, "We will soon be engaged in battle; remember, keep in rank: be neither before nor behind: stab with your sword, never cut, and keep one of your pistols for a strait—if you forget that, look at me and do as I do." Davie bowed acquiescence, and turning to his companion, said, regardless of their utter ignorance of his language, "This is brave sport; it's a grand thing to fight in France! if ye conquer, here's wine as abundant as dyke water, and black-eyed lasses to bring it; if we're killed, here's a good grass turf to lie beneath till the last trumpet sounds—od! a different fortune might hae befaun us had we lived in Hispaniola. But wha are thae now! they are neither soldiers nor ploughmen, but something atween the twa." This was said of a battalion of French who wore in part the dress of mechanics and hinds, and to an unpractised eye, seemed to want all the requisites of soldiers, save the national cockade and the arms. But though their bodies were undisciplined, their hearts were in trim: they were strong as giants in their newly obtained freedom, and dreaded neither the face nor the arms of those whom they regarded as slaves, and commanded to kiss the ground in their presence. The veteran masses of Austria and Prussia, confiding in their practised leaders, and in their own skill, were eager for the encounter with men who had never before faced an enemy, and chiefs who had not studied in the school of the great Frederick.

Their wishes seemed about to be gratified; covered by a wood, the Prussians had pushed forward both horse and foot, on purpose to turn the left flank of the French, and

force them from the rugged bank of the river, compelling them either to risk a general battle, or retreat at a venture—they had advanced unperceived. General Beauharnois, with his staff, was moving forward to gain some high grounds on which he had precipitated the march of the French; when the enemy, freeing themselves from the woody defile, darted upon him at once. In striving to unite with their own ranks, the chiefs of the French were exposed to a sharp fire from the carbines of the Prussian horse, which wounded several; and then to a charge, sabre in hand—for dropping their firearms and unsheathing their long swords, they spurred their horses to the gallop, followed by their foot in small squares, who seemed as they marched to rejoice in an already achieved victory.

In a little valley, edged with vineyards, Beauharnois was charged by the Prussian horse; the place was narrow; few could get into line and make the onset; but the contest was keen, and saddles on both sides were emptied. A part of the French foot, attracted by the charging clang of the trumpet, hastened towards the spot through hedge and enclosure, in single files, as they best could, and while in the act of forming on the edge of the valley, Morison found himself at their head, and instantly called on them to advance and attack. They levelled, as one man, their pieces on a squadron of horse hurrying to the aid of their comrades engaged with the general, and fired with an aim so true that a way was cut in the advancing line in which a waggon and horses might have turned. The Prussians recoiled; but their leader having stricken down two or three of the foremost files of the French, spurred up to Morison, and eying as if measuring him for the blow, assailed him at once. The Prussian, from the almost beardless look of his opponent, imagined him an easy prey; but after a cut and a thrust parried with admirable skill, Morison became the assailant in his turn. His blood was now up; his eyes emitted a fierce light; his thrusts were given with the rapidity of lightning, and seemed as difficult to elude. His antagonist dropped lifeless from his horse; he rushed on others with equal vehemence and success. The Prussians, after losing some of their best officers and veteran soldiers, withdrew from the charge, and repassed the river, leaving Beauharnois master of the field; Morison mingled with the soldiery, and seemed to think he had done nothing memorable.

Those were not days in which brave deeds were unnoticed or unrewarded. Beauharnois rode up to Morison, and, holding out his hand, said, "My friend Camille tells me he owes you his life and more; we have all seen how you have wrought for the republic to-day. Beauharnois never dresses himself in the deeds of others, nor desires to keep the light from them; come, therefore, to my bridle rein, and be my

comrade till I have authority from the republic to bestow permanent rank."

"Citizen general," said Morison, "your courtesy causes you to speak too highly of the little I have done. All around me seemed to do much more—as a stranger I must ask your forgiveness for presuming, in the whirlwind of the contest, to put myself so forward. I am, therefore, as one begging a favour, rather than meriting it."

"That is a speech worthy of one of the Grand Nation!" exclaimed a mustached grenadier.

"Let me bestow on you the fraternal embrace," said a major, who three days before rode in the ranks.

"You will be a chief of battalion in a single campaign," cried a rustic, who but a few hours before had aided in pressing the grape—the dark juice of the clusters died all the hand which he presented to Morison.

"Weel!" said Davie, "we hae began the business bravely—dod ye ken I aye telled ye how easy it was. D'ye no remember how heroes grew up like mushrooms in the ballad-books! this is just the soil for them. Now what wad ye say if I were to take a start out, jump on a wa' and pu' down a banner, kill a Prussian or twa, get the fraternal embrace, and have greatness thrust upon me! I wonder how I would bear wi't."

"Oh," said Morison, amused with his friend's dream of glory, "you would bear with it well; almost all the chiefs who now lead or rule in this army are of humble origin. Genius and worth are the exclusive produce of no rank or condition. Has not the peasant Burns hung an everlasting wreath round the ploughshare?"

"Eh, now, Maister Morison—ye maun allow me to call ye sae—ye hae loot in some light on my darkness. But what ails them now! is this anither buscade broken on us! If sae, it's my time to show that I can pull a trigger, and gar a sword whistle."

The stir which Davie observed was caused by the troops concentrating on purpose to pass the Rhine, over whose blue and hurrying waters a bridge of boats was thrown, and batteries raised to protect the movement. The advance was unmolested; and the foot, the horse, and finally the artillery, of a large army were poured over the long and quivering communication with an ease and regularity which amazed Morison.

"We shall have a battle presently, my young friend," said Beauharnois, "and had the enemy been wary, they would have forced ere this the combat upon me; but my men have now had a few days' drill—the passion of liberty animates them, and I fear not that we shall foil those who think to accomplish all by parade observances. There is not a Prussian queue that is not cut to pattern; there is not a button which

is not as a looking-glass ; their caps are fixed on their heads with paste, for they are too lofty above and small below to be steady without ; their belts are beautifully white ; and their guns, did ye not see how they shone in the sun ? My fellows are of a different stamp—they feel they are men, and know that the eyes of their country are on them ; they know, too, that a brown musket shoots as well as a polished one—that a sword which is sharp is a good weapon in an earnest hand ; they practise few manœuvres, for they need few ; their chief desire is to rush on the enemy, and—dine on the field of battle.”

The invaders continued to retreat, and the French poured a torrent of horse and foot after them. To Morison the latter seemed a mass too confused for any one to manage, and he was about to make this remark to the general, when a trumpet sounded ; the reeling and disordered column rushed into order ; array came out of disarray, and a front was formed as straight as a line, and as solid as a wall.

“The enemy have taken their ground,” said Beauharnois, calmly, “and will accept battle, where they are. In that desire, had I daylight, they should be indulged now ; but with to-morrow’s dawn I make my dispositions, and then let fortune favour the bravest.”

Morison rose before dawn, and traversed the French camp : all was still and silent ; each chief slept under his banner, and his men lay around in such order as the unequal ground admitted ; all about, and in advance, were placed sentinels : Morison passed these, and ascending a small hill whose summit was partly screened with vines in full cluster, looked down on the enemy’s army in slumber below. Their regularity amazed him ; it seemed as if some skillful mathematician had traced out the lines and placed the men ; the light which announces the coming sun, enabled him to survey the position fully, and with a slip of paper, and a pencil, he was noting the landscape—a rising knoll here, a small stream there—a marsh which separates the horse from the foot, with the whole aspect of the scene, when a hand laid on his shoulder made him start.

He looked up ; it was the general and two officers of his staff. “Sault,” whispered the former, “the work is done to our hand.” He took Morison’s sketch, and compared it with the actual scene from which it had been copied. “See,” said he, “how accurate, and how elegant it is ! Why, Roldan, you are a painter and an engineer, as well as a soldier. Come ! give us a touch of the latter quality : you see the position ! How would you attack it ?”

“In whatever way you may choose to command, general,” said the youth, bowing.

“No, no, out with it—I see you have a plan in your head—give me the use of it, else I must think for myself.”

Morison looked for a minute's space : " I am no soldier, but were this country mine, and I were called upon to do battle for its salvation—but you will laugh at me !"

" On my honour we won't—especially as I suspect your plan will be a good one ; I see it in your eyes."

" Then, general," said Morison, " I should hurry up my men even now, and detaching a column to alarm their left, pour my whole strength on the foot who occupy the right side of the morass, and crush them before the horse and artillery could come to their rescue."

The general looked on Morison, and on his two companions, and said, " You have spoken like a general of ten years' standing—it shall be done."

So saying, he hurried from the hill, put the army into motion, and the attack was almost immediately commenced.

The French rushed on with their usual impetuosity, carried a slight intrenchment which the Prussians had hastily constructed, and forced their way almost to the standard where the chiefs of the army were stationed ; but the discipline of the enemy was only shaken ; they bent for the space of ten minutes under the torrent of passionate flesh and blood, urged upon them by sound of trumpet and drum, and then, standing erect, fought as one man, and died where they fell. The want of discipline on the part of the French was more than compensated by the spirit, nay, rapture, with which they fought ; and this energy was well supported by the commander, who poured mass after mass upon the position, till the inflexible discipline of their antagonist began to give way. The Prussians retired sullen, and retiring fought, till the artillery, coming up on the spur, showered a storm of iron upon their flanks. They were then pushed off the field, but rallied within a league of the scene of contest, where they were then joined by the horse, who, in attempting to cover the retreat which they could not come in time to prevent, were roughly handled by the French cavalry and sharpshooters, and lost many of their best officers in fierce attempts to retrieve the fortune of the day.

Morison, hurried on by his impetuosity, hung on the rear of the retreating enemy, and even called on his comrades to renew the fight, when the Prussians made a stand. He was met by the general on his return, who embraced him in the presence of the army, pronounced him equally able and brave, and saluted him colonel, amid the applause of his whole staff. This unlooked-for honour brought tears to Morison's eyes ; he returned the embrace of the general, bowed to his brethren in arms, and sought to escape from the congratulations which fell upon him on all sides. But the enthusiasm of the French soldiers rendered this impossible ; they crowded round him ; some shook his hand, others praised his

handsome form and elegant mien, and not a few of them desired to be allowed to fight under his command.

When Davie Gellock saw this, he threw his cap into the air, and cried, "What wad they say if they heard of this in Glengarnock now? Here's the poor boy whom his lordly father disowned, and then sold into slavery, grown a greater man than ony of all his kindred! And here am I, that was aye called a gowk, and a dunce, and a dulbert—here am I, risen I know not how far; for weel I ken, that the tide which carries up Morison will not leave Davie on the shallows."

Much of this pleased the soldiers: they knew enough of history to know that the Scotch and French were for many centuries close allies; and they were republicans enough to rejoice that the merit to which a British lord was blind had been discovered in France.

As soon as the general was in his tent he sent for Morison, and inquired about his kindred and fortunes. The youth related all with much brevity and modesty, and added that he had no desire to return to his native land, where the doors of the high places were shut against the poor and unprotected. "France, through your kindness, general," he said, "has adopted me, and I am only anxious for an opportunity to show you that I remember such a favour. I have a mother—ay, a noble-minded, proud-hearted mother—who is living very humbly in my native vale; I wish her to know and partake of my good fortune."

"Have you no father, young man," said the general, with a darkening brow, "on whom some of your good fortune might fall? I had a father, but my country demanded his head, and I—" He hid his face in his hand.

Morison was doubly moved. "I am less fortunate," said he; the burning tears dropped thickly as he spoke: "Lord Roldan refused to call me his son when I was on my mother's knee, and I have sworn not to call him father, even should my name be heard of where noble deeds are doing."

"Give me your hand; let us kneel and swear eternal friendship—but no!—alas! I am not old, yet I have lived to see oaths snapped like reeds, and friendships severed, and brothers estranged. We will love each other without swearing it."

After a short silence the general resumed the conversation. "I am now," he said, "about to repose much confidence in you: I see you have wisdom and spirit beyond your years, and as you are young, you are the more suitable for the service I wish you to perform. I have ordered horses and all necessary equipments for a journey to Paris. It is proper to lay before the convention some account of my proceedings; and as I have extended the boundaries of the republic, and won her some victories, my account will not be unacceptable. You are spoken of in terms not quite equal to your

merit; but you will find what I have said will do more than confirm the command I have bestowed on you. Now attend: the French republic, one and indivisible, is already split into factions. There are the fierce Jacobins, the moderate Republicans, or Girondists, and a third party no one dare name, but which nevertheless exists, who love the old line of princes. I am of none of these; I am only a lover of my country. Keep your eyes about you; note all, but seem to note little; and if you frequent the theatres, it will not be much amiss, for no one will think you are an observer if you hum a fashionable tune and use a glass. I only wish to know how factions go on; for you will see, before you rise to the rank of general, that there is more than one chief in the army, ready, when occasion comes, to play the part of Cæsar or Cromwell. Above all things, continue to love me; and, as something to remember me by, accept this sword. With it I have won three great battles for France. I now introduce you to my treasure; give that letter to Madame Beauharnois, and follow her counsel and example in all things save one, and that is in the expense of your mode of living. Be frugal, but not mean. You will find Camille before you. Adieu!"

Morison went to his tent, where Davie was in full bustle of preparation. He found a packet from the general to the rulers at Paris; and more, a splendid uniform, and a purse, none of the lightest, to defray his expenses.

This last item pleased honest Davie much. "No," he said to Morison, "that we want siller, for I have the fifty guineas, never to speak of the bonnie bonnet-pieces, untouched; but, then, I am keeping them for a sair foot, or sic like—and it's best aye to make ilka job pay for itself."

"David, my friend," said Morison, "as soon as we reach Paris we must send some of this money home to your mother and mine; neither of them, I believe, will want when we are away; but then, to receive siller, Davie, from their sons will cheer their hearts; they will accept it as a token of our welfare, our wealth, and our affection."

"Weel, Morison—Lord, what a lucky lad am I! Now, that's just like you, it bears the Morison mark: ye're a real gude soul, if there's ane aboon the earth: token of our welfare, our wealth, and our affection! a cleverer saying never fand its way into a sermon."

Three other officers arrived on the same day with Morison at Paris, all on the like errand—to announce to the convention victories achieved for the republic on the frontiers of Spain, Belgium, and Italy. They were welcomed in succession: Morison was the last. The despatch which he presented announced, in moderate language, an important victory—nor were his own merits forgotten.

Thus wrote Beauharnois: "To Colonel Roldan I not only

owe my rescue from a Prussian ambuscade, but the plan of the battle that followed—and which my gallant young friend helped largely to fulfil.”

There was a murmur of applause when the despatch concluded: several questions were put to Morison, all of which, as they regarded military matters, he answered with graceful modesty. They confirmed his commission of colonel, told him they hoped soon to hail him chief of division, and dismissed him with the assurance of their regard.

As soon as Morison left the council, his thoughts flew to his native land. To his mother, whom he deeply loved and honoured, he wrote a brief account of his adventures, saying that which had caused her much sorrow had helped him to fortune; that he hoped soon to raise her to a station with the proudest of the land; and desired her to remember that he was still her poor boy, and had no other parent. He sent gold, silks, satins, lace, not forgetting some valuable jewels, a present from Lady de Regnault, desiring one of them, a diamond ring, to be given to Jeanie Rabson. Nor was the mother of Davie forgotten: that worthy, full of joy, wrote an epistle for himself; it was in these words:—

“Dear mither, ye aye said of your son Davie, when fowk said this and fowk said that o’ him, never fash yere beard about my Davie, he’s no gleg at the psalms, and he’s no quick at the ciphering, but he has a harle o’ rough sense about him, as broken a ship has come to land. Mither, ye’re maist a witch: our ship wasna broken, but she came to land. And oh! sic a land! The fowk were feckly black, I dare say a’ black by this time, for they were killing a’ the white fowk when we were there: and oh, but I was swear to leave the place—the kitchen fires were made of spice, sugar grew on ilka bush, honey drappit frae every bough, ye crushed pine-apples at every step; and whan ye gapit, oranges fell into your mouth. But no to be sure o’ ane’s life a minute was a sair drawback; and then Dick Corsbane, a sleekit, sly deevil, if he should come back to Glengarnock, which is no likely, as I saw him stabbed, and his house burnt about his lugs; but if he should come back, for he’s a souple customer and has mony twists in his tail, e’en inform the fiskie on him, and summon Morison and me for evidence.

“Weel, ye see, as they were killing fowk in Hispaniola for being white, I began to doubt myself, for though I’m no quite of a snawy complexion or a perfect lily, I thought they might take it into their heads—and they are as thick as bombshells.—that I was really white: so off we came; but no without trying lead and steel on some half-dozen of them, that wanted to compliment us wi’ a house heating; whilk, ye maun understand, they accomplish by burning the bigging down, and you in it. Weel, we gave ourselves up to the wind; and luckily, the wind was wiser than ourselves, for while I cried

Scotland, it wafsted us to France. Now, will ye believe it! Morison, him that was to wag his pow in a pulpit, wi' Jeanie Rabson for a hearer; Morison the meek; Morison that could learn seven psalms to my ane; Morison that was to be a preacher, and finish Dominie Milligan's sticket sermon on the pomegranate—I wadna gie ae pineapple for ten pomegranates—Morison, him that butter wadna melt in his mouth, he maun be a sodger, of all trades in the world: and has began till't in gude earnest, and risen to colonel of something: and poor Davie, what remained for him but sodgering too! oh, mither! it's an awfu' trade, yet it's a gainfu', for I fand a true gowd watch in ae man's pouch, and some hundred gowd pieces in another; and Maister Morison wears as muckle beaten gowd on his dress as wad buy the Netherholm, and mair in ilka pouch than wad stock Howe'boddum. Will ye just propound to our minister a matter of conscience: I have for my ain hand slain seven men, that I'm sure of, in fair battle, besides shooting at others: they wore hair on their upper lip, spoke sic language as a horse would scorn to neigher, and came frae a country called Prussia. If they are nae Christians of the kirk of Scotland, then my conscience is at ease. So no more at present from your loving son, David Gellock."

To Morison, Davie submitted this epistle, who read it with a smile, saying, "It is a singular letter."

"Singular!" exclaimed Davie; "I believe ye! But it's mair nor singular: isn't it diplomatic, as the fowk say here? Hasn't it the air of the warld about it? Hasn't it a travelled look? Could I have penned sic an epistle sitting at the back o' Drumroose? I'm no quite clear about the diction, but I'm gae and sure about the truths."

"Truths indeed," replied Morison; "but, Davie, you are now in an official situation, and you must be cautious how you write; it is bad policy to communicate to one nation what is passing in another."

"Ay, now," answered Davie, "that's said in your ain dry way. I ken aye weel what ye mean when ye gie that slee gledging look. But catch me communicating facts that will bring my thrapple under that damned national hayknife, the guillotine! I saw her busy betimes this morning, letting blude for the gude of the republic, as they tauld me when I speered: and what d'ye think? there was a saft Englisher wha had said something or done something that the Jacobin club twisted its mouth at, and off they hoyed him, reason or nane, to this cursed engine. But, I trow, he tauld them what they were, and what they wad come to; and died saying something about beloved Magna Carta: I maist grat to hear him, for nae doubt he named his mither, or his lass, maybe; eh, gosh! her hands wad feel safter to his neck than—but I'll say nae mair about it; it gaur's my blude grue. Confound a' official situations whilk conduct ane to the gallows!"

The conversation was interrupted by Camille Regnault, who, running up to Morison, took him in his arms, welcomed him to Paris, and congratulated him on his deeds and his honours. "Ah, David!" said he, "and you are here too! I am glad of it, for Lady Regnault has sent you a small mail, of which this is the key; the little which it contains is for yourself—you will see that she remembers the sad scenes in Hispaniola."

He then took Morison into a recess of one of the windows, and thus addressed him: "You must walk warily here, my dear friend; your feet are on the hot embers of the conflagration which consumed the monarchy, and these must not be stirred, for they will burn you. You belong to a nation which has shown a wonderful steadfastness and love of its ancient line of princes, and all you say and all you do will be listened to and watched. Be of no party for a time, and I say this more as your friend than my own. I belong to the Jacobin club, and must rise or fall with it; and let me whisper it, its acts are too fierce and bloody even for the national taste, and its day of dominion will soon be over." He paused and then continued:

"The Girondists are dreamers and poets, and will get ere long a bloody wakening; but the army, my friend, under wise and bold leaders, will save France, not from her enemies, but from herself. Camille may fall, but Roldan will rise—and many will rejoice in his rising. But come, I must take you to the Jacobin club. You stare! but such a step is necessary for your safety."

They walked along, arm in arm, and came to an open space, which seemed to want a structure to complete the unity of the surrounding buildings. When Morison mentioned this, Camille said, "You have an eye for everything. On this spot stood the Bastille, and the arm that is now in yours helped in a bloody assault to cast it to the ground, and pass the ploughshare and the harrow over its foundations—on this spot will a temple sacred to liberty arise. But ho! whom have we here!"

In the centre of the space stood a man of middle age; one foot was placed on a fragment of stone; he held a large piece of white pasteboard in his left hand—in his right was a pencil; his eye was turned upward, his lips were moving, and by fits and starts he was delineating lines on the paper. He heeded no one. Camille whispered, "It is David, the painter; he is designing a national building, or a national picture; all this rapture is put on to deceive, for the man has little imagination; his heart is as cold as the stone at his foot, and his chief pleasure is in spilling blood. I call him—to myself you understand—the tiger of the Jacobin club. Let us move on—he will come and produce the fruits of his inspiration presently."

CHAPTER II.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His daring look had daunted me,
And on his bonnet graved was plain,
The sacred posy—"Libertie."

BURNS.

MANY eyes, and some of them suspicious ones, were turned on Morison and Camille, but they sat serene and composed. David now entered, and going up to the president, presented his sketch, and said, "Citizen Robespierre, here is a conception which struck me as I passed over the ground once occupied by that stronghold of tyranny, the Bastile. I have imagined a temple of liberty—it is only a rough sketch—to this club of honest citizens I offer these first fruits of my fancy. Is the conception worthy of the cause?"

Long and gravely did Robespierre look at the sketch of the artist: he held it up, he held it down, and he held it straight-forward—not a muscle did he move. "Citizen David," he said, "the conception does honour to your genius, and honour even to the sublime cause of liberty: it is, in truth, as it should be, too sublime for vulgar comprehension, for the subject is the loftiest under heaven. I shall place it among the records of the club."

Danton snatched the sketch from the president's hand, and turning it upside down, observed, "It is like that most perfect of all human inventions, a circle. Whichever way you turn it, the right side is up."

"Then it is not like Citizen Danton's plan of a republic," said the incensed painter, "which was wrong every way."

"I object to the steps in front," said Couthon; "they are of the wrong material. The steps to liberty should be on tyrants' heads."

"A happy thought!" exclaimed the painter: "I adopt it, Citizen Couthon."

"Right, Citizen David!" said Robespierre; "give us even now a tasting of your art in that part of the design. You are a portrait painter, remember that when you limn in the faces; let me see, with whom should we begin?" and he looked round with an inquiring glance.

"Marat could tell us at once, were he here: he is a sagacious citizen," said Collot d'Herbois.

"I would not advise you to wait his coming," said a female voice, from the door; "the hand of Heaven has to-day

been heavy on him." The speaker was looked for, but she was gone.

"Nay, but," said Danton, whose great stature, fierce aspect, and voice fit for the reign of terror, made him conspicuous even in that terrible assembly, "let us sanction this design of Citizen David; let the heads in the first step be those of emperors and kings; let the heads in the second be those of traitorous princes and nobles; the heads of the third may, with perfect propriety, be those of generals who have betrayed the republic—Dumourier—Custine! Upon my life, friend David, but you have been beforehand with me: this profile is very like that of Beauharnois, who leads one of our armies on the Rhine."

"I did not mean it," said the astonished artist; "but let it stand, the thought is good, and seems inspired."

"Come hither, young man," said Danton, with one of his sternest looks, to Morison; "come hither, and tell me if that is not the likeness of the traitor Beauharnois? See you palter not with me."

With perfect calmness, and with a modest confidence which astonished Camille, Morison walked up to the judgment seat, took the sketch, and looking at it, said, "It is like General Beauharnois, and like him too as I lately beheld him, when, with his sword held out thus, his bright eyes flashing, and his manly countenance kindled and rapturous, he cried, 'On, Frenchmen, on! The republic expects you to do your duty!'"

"Well said, young man!" exclaimed Robespierre; "you are worthy of being a member this august club. Danton, you must find some other head for the threshold of the temple of liberty."

"France can spare Danton's for that purpose," said the same voice which alluded to the fate of Marat.

"But we cannot spare it," said Westermann: "besides, it would scare all the votaries—for Danton is not an Apollo." There was a laugh at this sally.

"Our friend, Camille Regnault," said Thomas Paine, "has introduced a Scotchman; let me introduce an Englishman. Friends! welcome Citizen Grubb, of the scientific town of Birmingham: he has got rid of all nationality, as fully as one of the engines which he loves to talk about is free from vital instinct. It is his boast that he can make wood and iron do the work which man has hitherto thought himself capable of performing. Look on my friend; the power which he patronises, but did not invent, has been compared to the elephant: let us divide the comparison; the body of the animal will then represent my friend, and the lithe proboscis the active and wonderful power of steam."

There was a smile visible in the faces of several of the

members, who were unable to determine whether he was in jest or earnest.

"Let him be enrolled in the club," said Robespierre; "and permit me to propose that Citizen David be requested to take our new associate's portrait."

"He cannot paint English beef," said Danton, with a grim smile.

"His head is a mathematical one," cried another wit of the club, "and that accounts for his eminence in science. It is a true triangle; the brow forms the apex."

"He comes from Birmingham," said a third wit, "celebrated over all the world for its brass buttons."

"We make more than that, sir," said the Englishman, his patience giving way; "we make capital pistols—ay! and can use them too! Would you like to try?"

"Well and gallantly said, sir!" exclaimed Danton; "there's my hand."

It was now Citizen Grubb's turn to speak; his words were few, but they startled many. "You depend too much on the hand of man, and too little on his head. You have wonderful inventions at your command, and will not condescend to use them. Do you desire to traverse the seas in spite of wind and tide—do you wish to travel along the surface of the earth, and carry a hundred tons' weight in your train, without horses or mules? Do you desire to work in the bowels of the earth, where the fountains of the eternal deep have hitherto retarded you; or do you desire to work machinery without wind and without water, without horses and without oxen? Then employ me, for all these things can I do; and, in doing them, I create an empire liable to no natural accident, established not on weak mortals, but on the immortal principles of science."

"It would be well, Robespierre," said Danton, "to employ this new power in moving your system of finance; for it will stand still, unless something miraculous interposes."

From this strange scene and terrible actors Morison turned away: he was revolving in his own mind the kind of distant intimation of evil which he had received about his friend, General Beauharnois, when he saw a female standing on a pedestal lately occupied by the statue of a king in one of the squares. She was young—she was beautiful—and her form slight and uncommonly elegant. Her long locks were bound with wreaths of laurel; a silken bodice, which fitted her shoulders and waist as tightly as her skin, and a kirtle, so short that it reached but a little below her knees, composed her whole dress. She held a spear in her hand. In fact, she had undertaken to personate the goddess of liberty; and to perform with proper audacity, had reinforced her natural courage with Burgundy, of which those close to her were the less likely to be aware since they had been

quaffing at the same fountain. She was, in other words, a missionary of evil, employed by the fierce factions of those times for insinuating charges, and preparing the public mind for banishment or slaughter.

When Morison came up, the goddess was haranguing the populace concerning the characters of the generals of the the republican armies: "Who are they," she exclaimed, "in whom France puts her trust? Some of them are royalists, with the tri-colour in their hats, and some of them are republicans in their words, and aristocrats in their hearts. Never will this great republic be safe till all such are weeded out from among you. Who warned you of the designs of Dumourier? Who whispered of the treachery of Custine? Who advised you to remove the head from the body of Prince Egalité? She who now tells you that Danton has wedded a handsome wife with aristocratic blood in her veins—and who now informs you that Beauharnois, who is victorious on the Rhine, was, is, and will be an aristocrat."

"We will cause them to take a peep out at the little window of the republic," cried one.

"We must introduce them to Madame Guillotine!" exclaimed another.

"Ay, ay," said the goddess, in a lower tone; "but, if we dare touch Danton, which it is whispered we may safely do, as Robespierre no longer loves him, who dare meddle with the general—he is at the head of a victorious army!" Morison was unable to hear the reply to this question, but it seemed satisfactory, for the mob shouted, and then, helping Liberty down from her pedestal, dispersed.

This was not, however, the only divinity Morison was doomed to see on this eventful day: in another public place he found the goddess of reason: one of the stone saints of a church had been cast out of its niche, and she was installed in its place. This was a middle-aged woman, inclining to be stout, with a shrill voice and a great flow of words: she came to supplant religion, but as there was no religion left to overturn, she soon quitted priestcraft and imaginary miracles, and entered upon the real object of her heart. "Reason," she said, "not only settles questions of faith, but questions of a civil nature. We are ruled by reason, and through reason we rule. But there are some who put themselves beyond the pale of reason. These are the kings of the earth, who claim by right divine to rule us, but reason said nay to this a thousand years ago, and reason says nay still. There are some who oppose all reason, and among those I number such as work by spell or charm to achieve something contrary to reason. Now, will you believe it, that one of the prime men among you—yea, one of the leaders of your victorious armies—has been dabbling and trafficking in this accursed

thing! It has been related in her own household by Rose Beauharnois, that a sorceress in Hispaniola told her she would be empress over a great people. Now, though the sorceress might be a deceiver, yet I say the woman who nourishes the notion of being empress in the land of France, is one capable of attempting to attain that dignity. Her husband commands on the Rhine: he ought to be introduced to the only saint whom the revolution has made—I mean Saint Guillotine." A loud shout announced how welcome this motion was to the mob of listeners.

A walk of ten minutes took Morison to the house of Madame Beauharnois; he was admitted; his letter was taken to the lady, who was still in her chamber. He soon heard a light foot on the stair and a voice saying, "Where is he?" The door opened—the wife of his general entered.

"Ha! Roldan, my young friend," she exclaimed, "so you have been at Hispaniola too, and had your fortune told by the far-famed Cunahama. Well, and was it bright—did the stars smile or did they look sullen? I can well believe the former; but you have saved Beauharnois's life, and helped him to gain a battle—so you may consider your fortune made, in spite of the stars. You must know the same great authority prophesied that I am to be an empress—so there's my hand—I shall not forget you.

Morison conducted her to a seat; and as he looked on her, he inwardly confessed that she had a regal air: her face was lighted up with such lustrous eyes as he had only read of in romance; they flooded her whole countenance with whatever sentiment possessed them; they smiled, nay, they spoke. Her voice, too, was sweet and musical; her form he never thought of, or left it for future observation. She was richly, and very gracefully dressed; and who can dress gracefully, that is not gracefully made?

At her request, he related all the adventures he had undergone, and more particularly those which had occurred on the Rhine.

She was struck with the clear and modest way in which he described all: "Well, Colonel Roldan, you must be my guest to dinner to-day; and as I hear you know much of the literature of your native land, you will find one or two here acquainted with the literature of France who will willingly learn something from your mountains. Your poets are famous in all lands: so farewell for the present—my dinner hour is five."

Morison rose to be gone. "Madam," he said, in a low voice, "General Beauharnois was so good as to desire me to consult you in any emergency—something has chanced this morning which obliges me to have recourse to you at once."

"Certainly, Colonel Roldan, you may command me; but

what can have chanced to you already: you came but to Paris late last night! Oh God! something has happened—I read it in your eyes! Speak out! that is, conceal nothing, but speak low: the stones of the streets of Paris have ears.”

Morison looked calmly in her face, and said, “I went to-day to the Jacobin club—”

She half-started from the couch on which she had placed herself: “The Jacobin club!—oh, unhappy young man, surely the devil!”—she smiled at her own vehemence—“must have dragged you thither!”

“It was God that took me,” said Morison, the tears starting at the same time into his eyes, “and he took me, that I might serve my best of friends, General Beauharnois.”

“Say how—say how?” she eagerly said.

He then related what has been already written. She grew pale as death as he proceeded; but when she heard his reply, and the words of Robespierre, her eyes streamed with light; she kissed his hand—nay, she clasped him in her arms, and cried, “Come here, Eugene! come here!”—a fine boy, some seven years old, came at her call—“Colonel Roldan has saved your father’s life twice—kneel to him, and thank him, boy.”

The child knelt, and said, “Colonel Roldan, I will love whom you love, and hate whom you hate.”

“I have more to say,” observed Morison, “and I may say it before Eugene—for he has the feelings of a man, though a child.”

He then related what he had heard those public functionaries, the goddesses of liberty and reason, dilate upon, and thought that General Beauharnois should be made acquainted with sentiments so publicly agitated. The lady laughed outright; “No one,” she said, “regarded such things: the words uttered in the Jacobin club were serious matters—not so those spoken by the tipsy divinities of reason and liberty. “Ah, you don’t understand the French, Colonel Roldan: you will see more of them soon; but come to dinner, and we shall remove all such dark, such hideous impressions from your mind: wit and beauty are always conquerors.”

“I have seen and heard something too much already,” thought Morison, as he returned to his lodging; “but let me not be too hasty in my conclusions.”

He called Davie to him, in whose rough untutored sense he found refuge now and then; his confidant was not at all disposed to look lightly on the matter, like Madame Beauharnois. “They deal in rash, unco rash expressions at the Jacobin club,” said Davie, “in the heat and ecstasy o’ the moment, whilk may mean something or mean naething, like the chance ravings o’ a tipsy man; but od! Morison, lad, its far different wi’ these pests of hizzies wha gang about giving a screed here and a screed there o’ revolutionary doctrine.

"They are just like the sea-maws and water-hawks of the Solway—ye aye hear their scream and see the flaff o' their wings before a storm: and then the storms o' Paris are storms o' blood. This freedom's a gaye queer thing; deil hae me now if I comprehend it fully."

Morison took pen and ink, and wrote in a brief, clear manner, all that had occurred to him since his arrival at Paris; sealed it, and putting it into Davie's hands with some gold, said, "Hasten with this to the Rhine, and put it into no other hands save those of General Beauharnois."

Davie looked at Morison, looked at the letter and at the seal, chucked the purse two or three times into the air, and at last said, "Promise that ye'll neither do nor say anything for five minutes' space." The promise was no sooner given, than Davie, to the astonishment of the other, opened the letter, read it, making his lips move all the time as if forcing the words upon his memory, and then thrust it into the fire, where it was consumed in a moment. "Now I am ready to go—am I to gie a look in on Lady Regnault, in the bye gaun?"

"Ready to go, fool!" exclaimed Morison; "why you have destroyed the very document of which you were to be the bearer."

"Na, na, Morison," said Davie; "I hae only ta'en a prented copy of it: I hae stowed the words away in a place where even Mother Guillotine couldna coax nor wheedle them out o'."

"You don't mean to say that you have my letter by heart? Why, you gomerl, you never could learn a verse of a psalm in less than a day and a night."

"Aha! but there's a mighty differ in the learning o' the twasome. What concern hae I in the sangs of Israel? But my heart was concerned here: listen now." And he repeated every word of the letter, adding, "If ye have a post-script, let me have it, and I shall gie't after 'Yours, ever and ever, Morison Roldan.' Dod! lad, ye should take care how ye write here; baith the general's head and yere ain were in yon letter."

Morison said, as this new light broke on him, "You are right, David: thank you for it. But you must carry something; no messenger ever went empty-handed."

"Ye're right, there, Morison; I was about to forget that—wisdom is aye presumptuous." While he was musing upon it, a gust of wind blew in at the window a feather from a fowl's neck, which a wandering poulterer held up for sale.

"Thank ye for the hint, Madame Boreas," exclaimed Davie, taking a sheet of paper from the table, and folding the feather—a red hackle—carefully in it. "Now gin ye wad just take yere pen and draw on the back o't after the words 'Lord John,' a real burly bull's head; it will bear me through

rarely, and maybe get me a glass o' wine for the wit o' the thing." Morison drew the animal. "It's no fierce enough and bo bo enough for my taste," said Davie; "but it will pass. Now ye maun ken that I am riding post as far as France has land, to put this into the hands of my Lord John Bull, regarding a main o' game cocks that's to come off at Paris; and that if I dinna find his lordship out at—I'll find out the name of the town as I gang—I'm commissioned to ride as far as the French army, as my lord has a taste for three things, horse racing, cock fighting, and bloody battles."

Having despatched this trusty and crafty messenger, Morison dressed himself out in uniform, and, as he passed down the street, could not help regarding his shadow with some complacency. He was received with equal warmth and politeness by Lady Beauharnois, and introduced to two officers and several ladies, guests at the dinner table. Little Eugene, of his own accord, came and sat beside him, and put his hand into his with a look of cordial confidence. His name and fame had flown before him, and he found himself exalted into sudden importance. Deeds of arms were talked of, works of genius were discussed, and Scotland and her innumerable songs became at last the fixed subject of conversation. On all of these subjects he was expected to speak, and he did so with such simple warmth, such natural good sense and true feeling, that Madame Beauharnois was enchanted.

"How happy am I," she said, "that such a high-minded man as my husband owes his freedom, and some of his fame, to no vulgar and soulless clod of the valley, with a thick skull and a herculean arm, but to one with the looks and the feelings of a gentleman. Cheer up, therefore, General Roldan—for such shall you be when I come to my kingdom—the kingdom prophesied to me by the sorceress of the sunny isles, even Cunahama."

One demure dame evidently received this notification with some displeasure: she said nothing, but her lips moved, and she gave an involuntary shrug of the shoulder. "Now don't go, Madame Mensil, and tell Danton of these idle words of mine," said Madame Beauharnois. "I only meant to make Colonel Roldan cheerful; it is the nature of these islanders to be gloomy, and it is our duty to make them smile."

"Ah! Roldan, Roldan!" said Madame Desmoulins, "I know something of that name; it is ancient and noble; here it is a fault to be either; in your island it is a virtue. But Thomas Lord Roldan—the kind, the brave, the beautiful, the unfortunate—who has forgotten him that ever saw him or heard him? his looks beamed—if I could find a stronger word I would use it—beamed with such imagination and heroism, as would even make Danton handsome and Robespierre an Apollo. He perished, I am told, at sea. A beau-

tiful child, a girl, accompanied him; some called her his daughter, some his niece; there was a mystery about her birth. And his wife—

"He was married then?" said Madame Mensil. "I suspected so, when you praised him so highly. What cannot be got at is ever beautiful."

"Oh, hang them! they are as sour as crabs," replied Madame Desmoulins: "runs not the fable so? therefore your position is no fixture, madame. But this lady was almost as lovely as himself, and she was an enthusiast too—not one of our Parisian enthusiasts, who tear the jewelled dresses from their bodies, Madame Mensil, and putting on the garb of handmaids, and fruit and fish girls, walk out, hoping a salute in the dark, which they cannot obtain in sunshine. No, her enthusiasm I call the romance of virtue. She wandered away no one knows where, and rumour says reigns a chieftainess over a tribe of savages—but whether in Siberia, or Scotland, or Arabia Felix, I cannot say—and I wish I could, Colonel Roldan, were it but in compliment to the attention you pay to my words."

"Do you remember the child's name, madame?" inquired Morison.

"No," said the lady; "for her mother always called her a lily, or a gowan, or a rose. She was too poetic to call a weed a weed, or a flower a flower; she dwelt among the stars too much for me. Nay, she had the child's nativity cast. I know not that she was to be quite a queen, Madame Beauharnois; but it was something great, I know."

The colour, during this conversation, changed so on Morison's cheek; that Madame Desmoulins said, "Ah! Colonel Roldan, you know more of that child than you would wish to show. She will be nigh your age too. I see I'm right. Alas for the berry-brown dames of France, as your scoffing song says."

"I am indeed of that family," said Morison, with a sigh, which he strove to suppress.

"Ha! and is my noble husband's friend of the blood of the noble too?" exclaimed Madame Beauharnois.

"I am of that blood," said Morison, calmly, "but not noble—the bar sinister is on my coat armorial."

"Ah! fine, brave, noble young man," said Madame Desmoulins, enclosing him gayly in her arms, without touching him, and kissing the empty air within an inch of his forehead, "you are come to us in a happy hour; here the bar sinister will be to you a recommendation. Why should it be a drawback! There is a lyric of your native land now chanting on both banks of the Seine; its o'erword is

'A man's a man for a' that,'

and in the poet's doctrine I heartily concur."

While Morison talked of song and birthright, Davie Gellock was on his way to the Rhine with the oral letter to General Beauharnois. He rode all the first day, and a part of the second without molestation, and had reached a farmhouse on the way side, and was looking at a red cock and a gray one fighting, when his eye caught the unwelcome apparition of two armed men hurrying along the road over which he had just ridden. Davie saw that flight would not avail, for he doubted not they were in pursuit of him; he lighted down, stooped and separated the cocks, which had entangled their spurs in each other's plumage, and pitting them fairly again by the aid of one of the farm hinds, stood cheering them on with tongue and hand, crying, "Well done, red, better done, gray—dod, ye're one of the Scots grays I'll wager a herring."

"It is our man," said one of the strangers to the other; "let us secure him cautiously—he is a devil both with sword and pistol."

Davie, who saw them as if he saw them not, allowed himself to be roughly seized while in the act of clapping his hands, and looking first at one and then at the other, in affected surprise, cried, "Hilloah, my lads, hands off!" and freeing himself by a violent effort, started back a step, exclaiming, "Now I am free and in a land of liberty—what want ye?"

"We want your papers, young man—a sealed letter. Produce it."

"Oh, an' that's a'?" inquired Davie, not at all alarmed.

The peasant recoiled from his side as if he had become a serpent; the cocks, however, fought on. Davie resumed the clapping of his hands, and his exclamations of "Well struck the red, and better still the gray!" Nay, he pulled a piece of money out of his pocket and invited a wager. He would bet gold, he said, on the gray, were it but for the sake of auld Scotland. The gray was at last victorious. "A right bit of game!" exclaimed Davie, picking up one of its neck feathers, and stroking it over the back of his hand; "the right airn gray colour, as I'm a sinner, wi' a cross o' the hoodie craw in its nature. I'll gie a gowd guinea for the cock," and he held out the money to the peasant, and pointed to the bird.

"Your papers! Your letters!" exclaimed both the messengers of the Jacobin club.

"Oh, ay," said Davie, "I had forgotten that." The letter was instantly produced and opened. Out dropped the feather. "Preserve us!" said Davie, picking it up, "dinna lose the speciment."

"You must explain this—it is a riddle," said one of the messengers.

"Oh, it's just a challenge to produce a cock of a feather to

fight Robin Hood. Dod, he ought to have been called scarlet rather. Can ye no read the backing of the letter—To my Lord John Bull—but ye maybe dinna ken the difference between a bull and a bantam.”

The two Frenchmen set their hands to their sides, and laughed loud and long; then elevated their eyebrows, till their eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and exclaiming, “What a droll fellow my Lord John Bull is! to be fighting cocks when the game of kingdoms is playing. Here, my lad, drink to the republic, one and indivisible—we have been misinformed respecting you.”

When Davie got rid of his troublesome friends, he halted not till he reached the French camp, and communicated Morison’s epistle, word for word.

“It is what I have long expected,” said General Beauharnois; but I shall not fly. To win a battle is to gain the enmity of the envious—to lose one is to be slothful or traitorous; and the end of both is death.”

He had hardly uttered these words when two commissioners from the convention arrested him and hurried him off to Paris, before the soldiers, among whom he had many friends, were fully aware of the circumstance.

A few days had flown past, when Davie Gellock, pale and haggard, and for a time speechless, entered, or rather reeled into Morison’s apartment, and, leaning his head on his hand against the chimneypiece, did nothing but sigh and mutter; “Oh what a country—what a damned country! Dod, Hispaniola, after a’, is a paradise to it.”

“Why, what is the matter?” inquired Morison; “and what has happened: you have sped ill I fear in your message.”

“Deed no,” said Davie; “ye may hae me crowned king of messengers when ye like; I bamboozled them; I hoodwinked them; I drew the black clout owre their een, as if I had been taking lessons in devilry by Belzebub himself, or the Jacobin club; but what was he the better of a’ that? Oh! the descent of that republican hay-knife on his neck I shall, I think, see till my dying day.”

Camille at this moment burst into the room, and said at once, “General Beauharnois is taken, tried, condemned, and beheaded!—there!”

The loud cry of—“A traitor’s head—a traitor’s head!” was echoed and re-echoed in the street, and the ghastly visage, borne on the head of a pike, with the yet warm blood dropping from it, was carried past the window.

“Alas! for the high-minded, the brave, and the good,” said Morison: “these are terrible people, Camille; who shall tell this tragic tale to Madame Beauharnois?”

“’Tis already told,” said the other; “on her way to prison she was compelled to kiss the gory lips, which she did

with a rapture that incensed the populace: her life will have a brief date, I fear."

Morison took a few strides about the room: "Camille," he said, "do for me what I did for you: enable me to get away from this land. I love freedom—I love equality—because they are man's birthright; but I hate bloodshed. The negroes and mulattoes have a thirst for blood, which blood will quench, but the French have a taste for it."

Davie, to whom these sounds seemed particularly welcome, began to pack up his own and Morison's stock of moveables, muttering, "Od, but the proverb disna aye haud gude that a rowing stone gathers nae fog! We left Scotland naked enough, and now, by my ain and Morison's wisdom, we hae got some roughness—gude dresses on our backs, and some plenishing in our pouches; but the chief difficulty is to keep our heads on our bodies."

"Be in no hurry, my friend, to leave this land; its sun of bloodshed will soon set, and that of its glory will arise!" exclaimed Camille, with a sort of wild rapture. "Those who rule even now will ere long be with those who ruled before. After the tempest, calmness will come, though I shall not live to see it. Marat—Danton—both have passed away! one with the poniard, the other with the guillotine—a third victim is preparing, and yet he knows not of it. Abide with us, my friend; I can protect thee, though I cannot protect myself."

The concluding words of Camille were inspired by his approaching destiny, and Morison laid them to heart. But, when they were uttered, Robespierre was in his pride of place; his word was law, and when he held up his hand hundreds were hurried to the guillotine. Danton, like the lion, made his bound on his victim, rent it in pieces, and reposed gorged for a time; but Robespierre resembled the tiger described by the eloquent Buffon, whose desire of blood even blood itself could not appease; the rending of one victim made him long to rend two more. Human nature at last asserted its insulted dignity, and Robespierre, with many who deserved to die, and some who did not, was swept from the earth: among the latter was Camille—he found the fate which his chief sought to find, and died by his own hand. Paris, on the morning of that bloody day, was in mourning through all her streets; her best, her bravest—nay, her loveliest—had been thrown into the den where the republican hydra lay, and more were binding up their hair for the like sacrifice. But Paris, in the evening, seemed one universal halo of light—had but one voice, and that was of rejoicing—had but one look, and that was an upturned one of thankfulness and prayer. The Moloch to whom so many bloody sacrifices were offered and offering, had been smitten on the groundsil of his own temple: his power perished with him—

fathers rejoiced—mothers rejoiced—and sons and daughters unbound their locks, and danced.

These terrible events were crowded into brief space; others scarcely less important followed, in all of which Morison was tossed about like a vessel in a stormy sea, surviving crushing winds and whelming waves. With the new government which followed the reign of Terror, the Parisian populace found their will was anything but a law; and reeling between royalty and republicanism, they armed themselves, and marched against the convention, driving opposing generals and hesitating troops before them.

Morison beheld with scorn the efforts of the timid Menou; and once or twice was on the point of drawing his sword, and leading the troops—which, though repulsed, were not dismayed—back to the charge.

His feelings were shared by a young officer who witnessed the scene. Turning to Morison, he said, "With five thousand such men as are on the Italian frontier, I would drive that undisciplined scum before me as the winds drive the down of the thistle. This is a country of volcanoes; revolutions are served daily up to breakfast."

"It would be well," said Morison, "to abide by those great points of freedom; which are the natural birthright of man. Let liberty and equality be the foundation on which the national structure is reared; but now, brute force is the ruling deity. Oh for one—a commanding one—to restore order and concord, and break the iron jaws of that ravening monster, who is devouring whatever is great and good in the nation!"

"These sentiments are mine," said the stranger; "and, if I mistake not, are uttered by him who so nobly saved the life of Camille Regnault, and who planned with such happy talent the order of battle which Beauharnois fought and gained on the Rhine. We must be better acquainted." He was about to say more, but the tide of tumult rolled forward, and separated them. They met again under a brighter star than that of despondency.

It was wearing late, and Morison stood among those anxious hundreds who crowded nigh the hall of convention, willing to be employed in its defence against the arming thousands who waited but for day to commence the attack. A hand was suddenly laid on his arm—it was that of the young stranger with whom he had lately conversed.

"Your destiny calls you elsewhere, Colonel Roldan: I am he who took Toulon; to me is intrusted the defence of the convention—come and share in the glory of Napoleon."

"And in the success too," said Morison, following him at once—"who would not follow where such a spirit leads?"

"We shall scatter them as the wind scatters the mist from the hill," observed the future emperor; "Roldan, I love

Caledonia, for I quote, you hear, her noblest poet. Ah! Ossian is the bard of heroes: his strains elevate man, and pour a soul into him such as that of Fingal. But here are my dispositions."

That the dispositions were made by the hand of a master, and that they were brilliantly fulfilled, is a matter of history. The result was, that Paris was cured by the sword of her annual love of revolution; order was restored; the doors of the prisons were opened; nor would those of the churches have remained shut, had not the philosophical ravings of Le-paux still bewildered the public mind. The young victor was rewarded with high command: he did not forget those who had helped him to achieve his greatness. "Colonel Roldan," said he, "you are named chief of division: your merits deserve more—but my other comrades must have something too—Murat, Lannes, Junet—these are not ordinary men."

"Citizen general"—such was the language of those days—"I have got more than I looked for. I have, however, one boon to ask—a boon which will give your heart joy in granting."

"It is granted ere it is asked, General Roldan—now, what is it?"

"It must be told by other lips than mine," said Morison, going into a closet, and leading forth a very handsome youth, and presenting him to Napoleon. "Now, Eugene Beanharnois, son of a good man, a gallant officer, and a lover of France, tell the general what your wish is."

The boy knelt on one knee, and clasping his hands, said, while the tears glistened in his eyes, "Give me my father's sword, and I shall ever draw it as he did, in the cause of France."

"Thou shalt have it, brave boy!" said Napoleon, taking him in his arms; "would that such a son were mine! General Roldan, I thank you for this; and I love you because you are the friend of the dead, the traduced, and the fatherless."

CHAPTER III.

Rumour is a pipe
 Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures ;
 And of so easy and so plain a stop,
 That the blunt monster, with uncounted heads
 The still discordant wavering multitude,
 Can play upon it.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE sounds which shook France awakened the British echoes ; the loud indignant voice of the people demanding the rights of human nature from their princes and peers, was grateful to a land where freedom was a sacred and a purchased thing ; purchased by martyrdom and by blood. At first numbers of Scotch and English flew to France ; their tongues were heard in the debates for liberty, and their hands were felt when the contest came to blows. On their return they spread the glad tidings of regeneration for that land over their native isle, and men looked for the rise of a superstructure like the British constitution, in which the three adverse spirits of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy are united, and pull all the same way, like three strands in a rope. But this blessing was denied to a people who deserved it ; the monarchy sunk under the pressure of democratic principles and despotic hands, and a republic which promised more than Greece and Rome had ever accomplished, rose in its place. Full liberty, true equality : these were the gracious things promised. The sounds were captivating, and half the world expected to see the highest genius in the highest places of rule, according to the purpose of the Creator. The poor by this expected to be enriched, depressed genius hoped to be exalted, and all, and they are many, who rejoice in the downfall of those above them, hailed the French republic, one and indivisible, with a joyous hail, and desired to see a similar regeneration elsewhere.

While the events happened which changed Morison from a banished lad, exposed to an obscure death, or perpetual slavery, to a leader in a conquering army, his little native vale of Glengarnock was not without its convulsions and its struggles. Something like a dream of his adventures and fortunes seems to have reached the vale before even the letter which Davie wrote to his mother ; and though his rise was doubted by many, the least believing were convinced that more than common fortune had happened to him when they beheld a very beautiful cottage of hewn stone arise in the place of the shealing in the Elfin-glen, and Mary Morison

herself, attired in rich silks, with maid-servants attending her.

It was then that the value of democratic principles was felt in full force. "What's to hinder us," they cried, one and all, "to rise to high command as weel as Morison Roldan? What hinders us but these stocks and stones, called lords and earls, who haud us down and winna' let us up. Are we not all equal by nature; didna Providence—and ane wad think that he kenned what he was about—didna Providence, when he made man, give him the earth and the fulness thereof, and bid him beget sons and daughters, and replenish and enjoy it? We shall have our natural rights again. God gave the land to us as well as to the lordlings, and if they winna do what's right we maun show them wi' a reeking whittle the way to justice."

A meeting to consider the best way of retrieving the true rights of the people was immediately held in the little village of Glengarnock. The first person that addressed them was Nickie Neevison. She was warmly opposed at the outset. "We want nae lang-tongue in petticoats!" exclaimed a weaver,

"We want?" cried Nickie; "wha cares what ye want, ye thrum of a man; do ye think that I have na studied the democratic form o' government? Look at bonnie France—there the lasses—the lang-tongues in petticoats of poor spoolpin there—are admitted, nay, invited to rule. My name is nae langer Nickie; it is Female Citizen Neevison, and I rise to move that I take the chair."

The chair to which she aspired was taken by a little shoemaker—a ladies' shoemaker. His hair stood all on end, like the bristles with which he armed his thread, and his words were as sharp as a closing-awl. "We are men," he began, "and women cannot be permitted to share our power. France had her Joan of Arc, but what she-saviour has Scotland had? I vote that Female Citizen Neevison, as she calls herself, be expelled the meeting."

Nickie's indignation mounted high on this: "And can ye call yersel' a man, ye bit lingle-end of a bodie! I could brain ye wi' a lady's slipper. I could extinguish ye atween my finger and my thumb; wrap ye in a pair of red morocco upper-leathers, and beat ye to death wi' a bawbee bunch of birses. What says the sang?—

"The souter gae the sow a kiss,
Grumph, quo she, that's for my birse;
Oh whare gat ye sae sweet a mou?
Quo the souter to the spw."

"Confound ye for a slanderous limmer!" exclaimed the chairman. Then bridling in his wrath, he added, "It is beneath

the dignity of man to regard but as the idle wind the words of woman. Her mouth, saith the wise man, is the porch of folly."

When this breeze blew over, a burley weaver came forward; weavers are great sticklers for freedom; they are suspended all day between the heaven and the earth; the movement of the shuttle reminds them of passing events; their continual motion throws thoughts up to the surface, as an agitated stream casts up bubbles. They are determined zealots, and when politics or religion want any strange thing done, a weaver is ready to undertake it. "This," said he, "is the first day of the glory of Glengarnock, nay, of the wide isle. The web of our fate has hitherto been pirnie; the warp was owre strang for the waft. Ye have all heard how one who had not the advantage of coming lawfully into the world, as all here have done, even Morison Roldan, has risen to wealth and high command. He has risen, not by the force of his talents, but by the glorious force of freedom, which, like a heat below a plant, has pushed him into upper air. My vote is for a republic where all shall be free, save those who use that villanous invention, the fly shuttle: it has been robbing me and my weans these seven years."

"My vote is for a republic also," said the blacksmith of the village; "it will haud us a' together like a waulding heat. But there maun be nae sic things as cast-iron mould breids used for ploughs, and there maun be nae tax laid on maut: we are workers in fire, and canna quench the spark just now, there's sic a duty on bottled ale."

"I wad vote for a republic, or aught else," said the village carpenter, "that wad make foreign timber cheap, lower my men's wages, and raise the price of ploughs, and carts, and harrows. Ye canna say but that's liberal."

"I come," said one, who, in speaking, always named himself—"I come as one entitled to speak in a matter connected with the freedom and happiness of man. I am head of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company; and our object has been to emancipate mankind from anything like personal slavery, by applying machinery to all the purposes of life. On this great principle I take my stand. All constitutions are wrong which are not based in the substitution of labour by iron, and brass, and wood, and fire, and water, for the toil of the body and the sweat of man." A general shout of approbation followed this speech.

"It sounds remarkably weel," said a mason, coming forward: "and I maun say that I mightily approve of the principle of easing our hands and cooling our brows through the help of science. But words are one thing, and deeds are another: look at the spinning and weaving machines of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company: is there aught republican about them—are they not expressly monarchical?"

For whom do they toil! For no one save the members of the firm: and if machinery goes on this way, thrusting hands of flesh and blood out of business, and pushing in its own iron fists into their place, all in the vale of Glengarnock will become beggars, save Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company. If we are to be slaves, had we not better remain under the rule of gentlemen than put ourselves under the merciless rule of science, which hath neither eyes to see; ears to hear, nor a heart to feel for the miseries of man?"

"We are wandering from the subject," said the chairman; "let us at once claim our rights; let us petition the legislature, and if they refuse to do us justice, then let us resolve to be men."

"I agree to that," said Tam Steek, the village tailor; "we have but a remnant of our liberties left, and that is slipping from us like a knotless thread. Here I boldly take my post, and with my right hand do a deed which shall be heard of beyond these hills; yea, likely as far as Hoddam." He took a young tree from the hands of one of his apprentices, stuck it in the ground behind the chairman's seat, while the green top, surmounted by a cap of liberty, from which dangled three shreds of cloth—red, white, and blue—rose proudly in the air, and waved and glittered over the head of the astonished son of Crispin. "Thus," continued Steek, "I plant the tree of freedom: let us all swear to moisten and make it prosper with the blood of tyrants."

"Hear to the ninth part of a man!" exclaimed Nickie Neevison: "the blood of tyrants! the blood of a louse ye mean, ye poor pitifu' prick the flea! An' ye'll hing up the measure of a pair of breeks, and call it the tri-colour. My certie! if we are to have our liberty, we mauna look for't frae sic shilpet sinners as Pegginawl in the chair there, or Spoolpin, the town weaver, or Tam Steek, the tailor—nor even frae that creature, born of a weaving machine, and dry-nursed by a spinning jenny, the head of the house of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company. Na, na! can ye suck sweet milk out of a sow thistle, or honey out of henilock! But here's one coming that will tell ye mair about it; if Lord Roldan disna gaur his supple jack walk the circuit o' some of yere shouthers, take me for Nanse Halberson, and score my brow for a witch."

All were startled at this announcement: and it cannot be denied that some of the loudest declaimers for liberty and equality wished themselves elsewhere.

Lord Roldan came among them on the spur: "Ha!" he cried, "so you have planted the tree of liberty: now show me who has done such a thing. Fools, dolts, knaves!" he cried, seizing the tree, and belabouring with it shoemaker, carpenter, blacksmith, and tailor, not omitting the important representative of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Com

pany. He then threw it on the ground, and rode over it, backward and forward with calm deliberation, and a look which seemed to say to all around, "Who dare stay me?"

"If he had gi'en me sic a blad as he gave to you," said the tailor to the shoemaker, "deil ha' me an I hadna returned it wi' something as gude."

"He's a born deevil, man," said the son of Crispin, rubbing his shoulder; "and, besides, carries bent pistols in his pouch. But, my certie, ye gat a lounder, Tam! ye hae nae reason to spare him; and ye were at his elbow too."

"I can tell ye what, my lord," said the blacksmith, "ye ken nae mair what's due to the dignity o' man than ye ken how to lay a new feather on an auld sock: take ye that now; answer that if ye can."

"It sets ye weel!" exclaimed Nickie Neevison, "a parcel o' poor pluckless, soulless coofs, to be gainsaying ane of the born lords of the realm, whose forbears never scrupled—as reason gude—to hae their ain way wi' man, woman, and creeping thing: and you, Lord Roldan, it ill beseems ye to come riding and rampaging this gate, striking east and striking west—riding down ane and riding owre anither—as if we were nae a' God's creatures as weel as yersel. But if ye kenned what I ken, ye wad maybe ride at leisure; if ye kenned what I ken, ye wadna be so handy wi' yere stick; if ye kenned what I ken, ye wad sooner hae ta'en the red-hot horn of Sandie Tewairn's study in yere hand, than hae meddled with the tree of liberty, the cap of freedom, and its three colours."

"Well, Nickie," said Lord Roldan, with a smile, "and what great secret is this ye have got: out with it; ye can no more keep it than the cloud can keep the shower."

All eyes were turned upon Nickie: even the representative of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company forgot the blow which all but prostrated him, in anxiety after this secret; and the shoemaker, tailor, and others came near, that they might have the benefit of her news. Nickie screwed her mouth, shook her head: "Some winna like to hear it, Lord Roldan," she exclaimed, "for gentle lugs canna bear strong tidings, nor a weak stomach buttered brose. But I maun first and foremost upbraid ye for sending awa' yere ain flesh and blude wi' sic a born reprobate as Dick Corshane, who has sauld mony a fair face into slavery to my certain knowledge."

"Hold your peace, ignorant woman!" said his lordship, sternly; "you talk, but you know nothing."

"Dinna be so sure, my lord," said Nickie; "I maybe ken, and maybe I dinna ken; but I ken this, that Morison—my ain Morison I aye ca'd him—sold for a slave or unsauld, is now a hero—a hero! he's far better nor that; he's a furious Jacobin; naught will serve him but knocking off the bonnets

of princes and peers: he's coming here too; and my faith, he'll burn Bowness if ye dinna be a gude lad, and marry his mither. But I'm no sure that he wad let ye do't; he's a mickle man now, they say, riding in gold and grandeur at the head of three armies; and d'ye ken he has changed his name, they say, to Napoleon: its no unlike Roldan; there's I's in baith."

Lord Roldan smiled, and giving his horse to a servant, took the representative of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, a little aside: "I am surprised to see a gentleman of your influence and respectability," he said, "employed in propagating opinions which must scatter wealth and divide property. Allow me to say it, my friend, your excellent good sense, your knowledge of the world, and your extensive connection with foreign lands, prepared me for higher things, unless, indeed, you are come to control and soften the opinions of this rude rabble, and lead them into the true path, by pretending to prefer their road."

Hugh Heddles fidgeted, shifted place, adjusted his coat, which was a little deranged by the uncereemonious way in which Lord Roldan had laid about him with the tree of liberty, but he could not resist the complimentary speech, and said that he came not to help the water to flood the machinery and drown the miller, but to direct men's eyes to the true philosophy and science of the matter.

"I thought so," said Lord Roldan; "for you cannot but know, that if I am lord of land, you are lord of machinery; if I can hunt and shoot on my grounds, and draw in rent from my farmers, you can trim your fire and boil your water, move your wheels, and create and sell as much cotton in a week as would buy the half of Glengarnock. I am but a lord of soil, you are a lord of science. You must come and dine with me."

Low bowed Hugh the lord of machinery to the lord of the soil, and retired. The peasantry perceived and resented this bit of backsliding.

"He's but half a man," said Tam Steek the tailor, "to allow himself to be talked owre in that way."

"He's like ill-made steel, spongy in the heart," exclaimed the blacksmith.

"And nae mair to be trusted than Kendalben sewed in a hard frost," chimed in the shoemaker.

"I would na trust him farther than I fling my shuttle, and that is frae hand to hand," grumbled the weaver.

Lord Roldan returned to them with smiles and bows; he was received rather gruffly; but as they began to suspect that they had carried their love of liberty too far, they were only sullen and said nothing. "I was obliged, my friends," said he, "to seem rough and angry in the presence of one who is a stranger, and whose interest not being our inter-

est, may be considered as a spy. The lords of Roldan have ever fought for you, opened their gates to you—when you were oppressed rescued you; nor have they left the soil to waste the substance which you won for them in far lands. From what poor man have we taken bread! What hands have we thrown out of work! What weaver's loom has been silenced by us! Whom have we robbed that we might grow rich! But behold that steam-engine lord! He sits, like a bloated spider, in the centre of his machinery, and the maiden whose white hand spins the thread, the weaver whose skill turns it into cloth, and the worthy dame who bleaches it on the gowans, are deprived of the fruits of their industry. The reformation which the country wants is the destruction of all these accursed scientific instruments, which are beggaring the whole human race."

"I aye tauld ye this!" exclaimed Nickie Neevison. "What did I no say, now! Have they no invented an engine for making of shoon? three hundred in the minute, three-and-saxpence the pair—regular channel pumps. What will become of poor Rob Birse?"

"There's nae doubt that it will be an awfu' thing, after having stood the bensel sae long, if we are enslaved by machinery," said the shoemaker. "To be overcome by the pith of sense and vigour of bone and muscle is bad enough, but to be banged by damned timber and iron is no to be endured."

"My lord is no sae far wrang as we jaloused," said the mason. "He lives on his land, he drinks on his land, and though he does na thrive on his land, that's because we allow foreigners to come, like this bodie Heddles, and plunder us a' by means of machinery. I think machinery will soon do a' things. In England, whare I since travelled, I found them verily worshipping God by means of a machine called an organ; and in France, where I never travelled, I'm tauld that headsmen were found too slaw to keep pace wi' public thirst o' blude, and that they invented a machine for shearing off heads, ten to the minute. But what waur is that than Heddles and his inventions whilk take the claes off our back and keep the bread out o' our bellies?"

The sun had gone down, the harvest moon had risen dull and watery above the hills, and the dew began to glisten on herb and flower. The tide was setting strongly into the bay, and vessels from various lands showed their masts and rigging in the distance. As one by one they came into view, conjecture was busy about name and cargo. "Yon's the Maggie Lauder, frae the Baltic, wi' foreign fir," said the carpenter; "a scarce article and a valuable, for our Scotch pine has neither the pile nor the pith of these Norwegian plants."

"And yon's the Cuttie-mun, frae Barbadoes," said another,

"laden wi' that valuable weed, tobacco. I declare the smell o' the article comes in the wind."

"And yon's Archie Tamson's Racer Jess," exclaimed a third, "wi' sugar frae Jamaica; we canna live without it now; but I hae seen the day that nae laird wad let a rig o' land to a farmer, if his wife drank tea. It's a changeable world!"

"Ye're a' blind thegither!" said Nickie Neevison, with a loud hurrah; "for yon's the van of the French fleet, commanded by my ain Morison. My conscience! he'll make clean work o't. There will be whuppin' o' cripples when he comes! He'll remember wha gat him, and wha forgot him. Oh, rin! will nane o' ye rin, and tell Mary Morison to come out of her grand new house and welcome her son! It's a mercy I was aye kind to him, sae I hae naught to fear. I tauld ye sae, now—hear till that—I think they'll set the bay of Glengarnock on fire!"

It seemed as if Nickie's random prophecy was to be in part fulfilled; a vessel shot suddenly over from an English bay, hung out a signal, which one of the ships now standing into the firth either could not or would not answer; a ball fired ahead came skipping from wave to wave; a second ball struck the ship, and then shots sharp and fast followed, tipping the long foaming lines of the tide with momentary fire, and making the caverns re-echo. The whole land was in commotion; men hurried down to the shore on foot and on horseback, all anxious and all armed; no one doubted but that the French armada was at hand; lights were kindled on the hills, and bees after a summer rain, when the sun shines out, were never busier than was the whole population, in doing no one could tell what, save tiring their limbs, and exhausting conjecture about this strange and warlike visitation. It seemed as if the firing, which for some space continued hot, had called down the night, for the smoke below rolled no thicker than did the clouds above, so that neither shore nor sea could be seen, save when the flash of the cannon revealed them. Even this momentary light failed; the combat suddenly ceased; the vessels were seen no more, and all was silent, save the rough gurgle of the tide on the rock, and the hurried question and answer of peasant, to peasant by the side of the sea.

Among those whom the combat in the bay called to the shore were three gaugers, whose business was to watch against the introduction of contraband commodities from the Isle of Man. These functionaries were very cordially disliked by the people, who naturally desired to obtain their tea, their brandy, and their silks, nay, their salt, duty free: instead, therefore, of affording them assistance against a resolute smuggler, it was the chief pleasure of the hinds and the farmers to baffle or mislead them.

"What is all this about?" inquired the foremost gauger.

"Where's yera een?" cried Nickie Neevison; "can ye no see? under yon cloud lies a' the French navy at anchor, only waiting for the sun, to invade us. My certie, lad, ye'll get it when they come! When the deil angles for souls in the dub o' darkness, he baits his heuk wi' a gauger."

"Ah! Nickie, are ye there?" said the second gauger; "I like to hear that sarcastic tongue of thine—there's aye mirth in the land when it wags."

"Ay, Robert Burns, man, is this you?" said Nickie, lowering her voice, and speaking in a tone almost approaching to sympathy; "we heard that ye were na weel—that the voice of the muse was hoarse and roupet, and that cold, and fever, and stricken-down hopes had formed a combination against you."

The poet replied with a sigh, "Ye heard but the truth, then. I'm no just weel, tho' I'm gailie yet: but are ye no coming to gi'e me a shake of yere hand? ye hae gi'en me that and a kiss too, before now."

"Ay, but ye mae a sang about a' ye say or we do," said Nickie; "and though

'A kiss is but a touch,
And a touch can do nae ill,'

it's as weel to bide awa frae ye, Robin, sweet though it be to live in sang."

Here this idle talk was interrupted by the third gauger, who exclaimed, "Have done with this nonsense! here is the king's peace broken, our rest destroyed, our revenue injured, and yet we consume our precious hours in senseless palaver. Here, woman—Nickie—what's your name—tell me what you have heard and seen, and there's sixpence for ye."

Nickie, with a look of simple archness, stepped close to this third authority, and looking earnestly into his face, exclaimed, "Eh, God guide us! but I'm waur nor blin'—if this binna the supervisor himself: I thought it was Dick Grahame: oh, but I'm glad that some one has come clothed wi' proper authority. A man of such mark we may obey without lowering ourselves. For ye are humble wi' the haughty, and haughty wi' the humble, and with the backward ye are forward as fire—a perfect gentleman!"

The supervisor's companions smiled at this sarcastic commendation. "If no one will tell me what all this means," said he, "why then I will ride along shore and see into it myself," and he spurred his horse forward.

"Take care, sir, of the gaugers' hole!" cried one rustic; "it lies right afore ye, and's as fit for drowning a supervisor as it was for swallowing poor Jamie Macrabin."

"And see that ye dinna get into the Mermaid sand," cried a second adviser; "the bonnie sea maiden can sit on't and warble her charmed airs to mariners and the moon, but it winna bear the weight of a supervisor."

"There will be an inlake of the establishment if the demented bodie rides into the bight of the bay," said Nickie, "which I shall heartily rejoice at—for it will give Coila's inspired son a lift. I wonder what tempted the government to waste the sweetness of such a bard on the desert air of the excise!"

"We must not allow our friend to enjoy the honour of martyrdom alone, in rummaging out a pound of smuggled tea," said Burns, and followed his superior.

The tide had but half filled the bay: the night wind set in from the Irish shore, and the waves came leaping and rushing, casting foam into the air, and sending a sound before which was heard inland for many miles. "Are you well acquainted with this line of shore, sir?" said the poet to his superior; "it abounds with quicksands, which are better missed than found, and bends and bights where a thousand men on horseback, riding in the service of the kirk, might be drowned in three minutes: we're gaugers, and serve strange gods."

"We serve his sacred majesty, sir!" exclaimed the supervisor.

"True, true," said Burns, "he is head of the church. In good time, here comes the tide—had ye not better speak to it. Hilloa there! we are on the service of his most excellent majesty. Damn these democratic waves! they mind us no more than they have done all other people, and some of them supervisors."

The supervisor halted. "You astonish me, sir," he said to the poet; "you make a jest of everything. You would talk treason against St. Peter if you were going in 'at the gates of heaven."

"Very likely," quoth the bard; "but gaugers are like camels, they are too large for the entrance. Don't let your certainty of heaven carry you into the tide—and here it is."

The impetuous tide rolled against horse and man—and nearly threw the supervisor down—he turned his bridle shoreward, and galloped. The words with which he was welcomed as he came dripping to the beach, were not of a more cheering nature. "There maun be something gude about the cursed bodie," exclaimed one rustic, "which we didna ken of, for he has escaped."

"Deed," exclaimed a second, "he's sae utterly bad that the sea that wad drown a mad dog wadna meddle wi' him—it has fairly bouked him out; sic stuff wadna bide on its stomach."

"Hout, sirs!" said Nickie Neevison, "remember he's a Christian."

"Christian!" exclaimed a smuggler; "he's as soon the man in the moon—he's nae Christian—he's an exciseman."

The supervisor took shelter in a public house nigh the shore, and there, with his pistols laid on the table, and something comfortable preparing in the kitchen, the representative of majesty proposed to abide till he should hear of the smuggling cutter which had so suddenly called him into action.

"Be sure," said the keeper of the hostel to his wife, "be sure and rin whenever the supervisor rings, and let us, aboon a' things, labour to please him; for he's as proud as a turkey cock, and thinks a' fowk fools but himself."

No sooner had he taken a seat, than he began to show that the Boniface of Glengarnock had measured his character more accurately than perhaps he ever measured a whiskey gill. "Be seated, be seated," he said to his companions; "and here, take a glass of this warm punch; it is good for the night air, and may be beneficial after the narrow escape which I made in my zeal for his majesty's service. And now, gentlemen, more particularly you, Robert Burns, let me admonish you to be more circumspect in speech than has hitherto been your pleasure. Your allusions to established things are both free and dangerous. It countenances, too, the insolence of the peasantry. Did ye not hear how rudely they wagged their tongues against me when I was so providentially rescued from the waves?"

"Truly, sir," said Burns, "the dignity of our profession is so well supported by your looks and by your actions, that inferior officers are rendered careless: even I myself—a mirror of propriety formerly—am become little better than one of the wicked. Whenever you are nigh me I feel wild thoughts rising in my heart, and wild words mustering atween my lips; I feel, in short, that it is no longer necessary to be prudent or circumspect, as our supervisor attracts all eyes, and sustains the honourable profession

'Of guaging auld wives' barrels.'"

The supervisor, deceived by the quiet grave face of the poet, imagined his words were all to the increase of his honour, and clothed himself in more consequence. He looked more loftily, distributed the punch with something of a regal air, and then said, "Has the muse not visited you of late, Robert? have you had no twilight interviews with her where the Clouden meets the Nith? Why, the scene we have just witnessed—a scene where your superior officer, in the discharge of his duty, endangered his life—might inspire you."

"I have been crooning over to myself a stanza or so on

the subject," said the poet, "here's a tasting; tell me how you like it.

"The deil came fiddling through the town,
And danced awa wi' the exciseman;
And ilk auld wife cried, 'Auld Mahoun,
We wish you luck o' the prize, man:
We'll make our maut, we'll brew our drink,
We'll dance, we'll sing, and rejoice, sir—
Deil, dinna be nice, take my advice,
Come back for the supervisor.'"

"Sir," said the offended officer, "you are a person of incorrigible levity; and whether it be verse or prose, you cannot abstain from a fling at the higher powers. But beware! remember you were admonished that your business was to act and not to think: the government may not always be in so milky a mood, nor your superior officer so gentle. Your levity reminds me of my duty: see that your pistols be loaded, and that your sword will leave its sheath; then go and watch for two hours between the Sea-gull cliff and the Falcon tower; observe what is doing in the bay, and should smugglers appear, arrest them in my name, and in that of his majesty."

The poet, in no pleasant mood, placed himself on the watch; but the air was fine and the scene pleasant. He soon forgot that his business was to observe, and not to muse; and giving way to his imagination, travelled back in Scottish story; filled the bay with English shallops; lined the shore with Scottish spearmen; heard the horns sound and the bugles blow, and saw the white line of shells on the shore died with the blood of encountering ranks. He was standing on a rock nigh the Falcon tower; his drawn sword was stretched towards the dancing waves, and he was looking at the moon, as it tinged the eastern hills, and stained all the grass slopes with silver. A boat unperceived came close to his feet, and a stranger, tall, handsome, and partly muffled in a sea cloak, sprang upon the rock, and exclaimed,

"The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are ranked ready,
The shouts of war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody."

I heard these words sung in a foreign land—they bear the stamp of Burns."

CHAPTER IV.

Is there no patron to protect the Muse,
 And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil?
 To every labour its reward accrues,
 And they are sure of bread, who swink and mow;
 But a fell tribe the Aonian hive despoil,
 As restless wasps oft rob the painful bee.

THOMSON.

The poet, at this unexpected address, stepped back, and said, "What! has Lord Roldan been tempting the waters to-night?"

The stranger turned quickly round, and by the moonlight showed a youthful face, dark and tanned with the sun of a hotter clime than that of Scotland; a face which the poet knew, yet could not name. "I am no lord, sir," said the stranger, with emphasis: "I am but a man—for I hold, with the bard of Caledonia—

'The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
 The man's the gowd for a' that.'

And I have been where that is the text, from which the great moral and philosophic sermon of human nature is preached."

"I shall not ask where that land lies," replied Burns; "neither shall I ask your name; but I can guess both—Morison,

'Your native land was right ill-willie,'

and I shall quarrel with no other for being kind to you. You are welcome, whatever wind has wafted you."

"I thank you," said Morison. "My native land has indeed been unkind: I was cast from it, as an unfledged bird is cast from its nest in a stormy day; that I have not perished, thanks to good fortune, and to that Power which tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

"You see," said the poet, with a bitter smile, "that I have got something from my country, which renders it very dear to me; for an idle song and a ludicrous verse or two, I have been elevated into the excise; behold, I am a gauger, whose business it is to hinder an old wife to smoke her tobacco free of duty; or a hind who has the toothache to relieve it by untaxed brandy. Should you have French lace on your shirt, or an Indian handkerchief in your pocket, I should feel it my duty to seize and retain them."

"Oh! but," replied the other, in the same tone, "I come from a land that has taught me the art of resisting such aggressions. I carry about me little articles of curious manufacture, which, when rightly used, repel in a moment all such attempts as you allude to, and moreover level all distinctions."

"You excite my curiosity much," said the poet; "the sound of liberty and equality has reached our shores, but wo to those who are charmed with it."

Morison and the poet walked side by side for a little space; they eyed each other—they were willing to be confidential; the former from the love and admiration which he entertained for genius, and the latter from an open frankness of nature, and the pleasure which he had in unburdening his soul to one of a kindred spirit.

"You say," said Morison, "that the sound of liberty and equality has reached these shores, but wo to those who are charmed with it. What wo can come upon those who entertain opinions manifestly in unison with the creation! God made man in his own image, but did God make the dukes and princes, born in the purple, who now oppress him?"

"How much of that is my own opinion," replied the poet, "time will show."

"Nay," answered Morison, "it is all your own; the freedom which is now brightening over Scotland is a halo from the verse of Burns: who, like him, has sung of man with his feelings, his impulses, and his aspirations! Can I forget the many noble verses in which he has inculcated independence!—who can answer this?—

"If I'm to be your lordling's slave,
By nature's law designed,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?"

The calm rapture with which Morison repeated these lines touched the poet both as a man and a genius; he turned full round on him, held out both his hands, and said, "If you were Belial—pay, if you were Robespierre's spirit, you are welcome, and you are safe: but hush! who comes here? Well, it may be so, but no man will ever persuade me that the moon has not power on the flux and reflux of the tides. Why, sir, the planet holds rule over all inconstant things; it influences women, it influences the councils of princes, it rules our waters, it ripens our corn, nay, it whitens our linen."

"Stuff, stuff!" said Hugh Heddles, head of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, advancing. "What's all the moonshine in the firmament compared to my incomparable scientific solution for purifying linen and rendering it white? Stuff, stuff! it will bleach a seventeen-hundred linen web, forty ells long, better in ten minutes than

all the moons that ever shone, aided by a hundred white-legged lasses such as ye take pleasure in singing about, with ladles in their hands, will do in a summer season. But what are ye doing here, stride, striding amang the shells and pebbles? the fighting ships are ance gane and aye gane, and nobody thinks of smuggling an ell of lace or a pound of green tea now. No, no! go away with ye to yere cities and yere towns; there's more tricks practised on the revenue there in one hour than there's in the country side in a year." While saying this Hugh touched Morison's foot slightly with his; kept peering into his face and winking at the same time with the left eye, as if he had something very particular to communicate. The poet perceived this, and humming the air of Lewie Gordon, and fitting a word here and there to the tune, strode quietly along the shore.

When the gauger was fairly out of ear-shot Hugh opened his commission. "It's no," said he, "that I'm much afraid of Burns: he's other than a sharp one I can tell ye, and's owre muckle ta'en up wi' his daft sangs and rhymers falderals, to heed what's either coming or ganging. More nor that, his muse is other than a moral ane—he has composed a dozen sangs; some say fourteen, on a graceless quean here, called Jean Lotimer; so ye see there's little cause of dread frae him; yet ye're right—I commend ye: cast a bone in the deil's teeth, and giff gaff's a wise thing even wi' a gauger. But where, in all the world, have ye the cargo hidden? Mind, I want half a dozen ankers of it, right pure and gude. I find a ready market for it among my machinery lads: I pay them in kind, and have the tae half o' the tither out of all commodities. Sax ankers, mind that—but ye maun take payment in cottons: siller's as scarce here as pineapples; and throw a basket o' spicery into the bargain, it's naught to you, but something to me."

Morison allowed Hugh's tongue to run on without interruption. "I am but a visiter here, sir," said he, "a lover of the muse only."

"A lover of the muse?" exclaimed Hugh. "I might have expected as much. I took ye for a seafaring person—a captain for yere ain hand: but if ye deal in the spider-web manufacture o' the muse, I have done wi' ye: hegh, be't. how a sea cloak and a bould step deceive ane: I'll take a clocking hen for a gier eagle next: gude-night."

Burns rejoined Morison with a laugh:—"There spoke the whole isle from Cornwall cliff to the Firth of Pentland—'Behold a nation in a man expressed.' Men are becoming mere machines; nothing is beautiful with them, unless they can prove it to be useful; the gowans will be weeded from the ground, and the northern Aurora, with her tresses of celestial fire, pronounced an idle meteor, not worth the glimmer of a farthing candle."

"So will many continue to talk," replied Morison; "the art, unteachable, untaught, will be despised by all who have little sensibility; by all whose hearts are not open to the beautiful, or throb not at the impassioned. But what grieves me more than all is, to see men whose works diffuse happiness through millions of bosoms, deprived of the station which God had ordained them to fill, and jostled into the mire by some titled accident of a lord—some coronetted piece of impertinence; and such things calmly endured."

"Not calmly endured, sir," replied the poet; "but who would kick against the pricks? Here hereditary rank has for half a century lorded it over hind and mechanic: it is true, that in this the purpose and aim of creation are violated; but all the power, all the wealth, all the land of the island, are in the hands of a few hundreds; he who grumbles is deprived of bread, he who does more is deprived of the little liberty that is left him."

Morison sighed and said, "The picture is a just one; but a spirit has arisen which kings cannot charm down, that will amend all this. In France, as in Britain, some men were born rulers; rank was everything, and the rest of the nation nothing; the hind and the mechanic appeared born to be saddled and bridled and ridden by the spurred and booted nobility. This was long endured; but France served her apprenticeship to freedom in America, and returning home set up for herself; at one gigantic effort she threw a ten centuries' load of oppression from her back, and stood erect and free. This alarmed those who rule the earth—all Europe preached a crusade against her: now was the time to show that divine power pertained to divine right; on rolled the tide of aristocracy, and France seemed about to be swallowed up; but men who have something to fight for will fight like men; the invading hordes were repulsed with shame."

"Yes, sir," said Burns, "France fought nobly, God justified the principles of creation, and gave victory to those who claimed freedom for their birthright."

"The great war," continued Morison, "is but begun: the great war of right against wrong; the great war in which rank of intellect will achieve dominion over the world. The right divine of the few will be opposed to the natural right of the many, and France will have to fight, single-handed, the fight of the human species—and she will be victorious."

"I trust she will, sir," replied Burns; "and yet I dread the result; whole nations of well-disciplined slaves will be forced against her; the fiery and impetuous chivalry of many lands will be all on flame to justify, on democratic crests, their aristocratic pretensions."

"It cannot fail to be so," was the answer. "And yet there can be no doubt of the upshot. All the military genius of France—all the talent which she produces, will be armed

and in the van in her cause. She follows up the great principle of nature; she knows what genius is—that merit supe with a horn spoon, as well as with one of silver. The brave, the daring, the skilful, and the inventive, rise stride after stride from obscurity to distinction with her; some of her best leaders were ploughmen and grooms; the chief of her army is a poor youth, educated at one of her charitable schools; had he been born here, he might have risen to the rank of corporal, for his family was too poor to purchase military station, and as he is steady and methodical, who knows but he might have become paymaster sergeant? he is now about to lead the arms of France against the despotisms of Italy—the half of Europe will be at his feet in one campaign.”

As they traversed the seashore, a solitary stroller might be here and there observed, or groups of peasants carousing; while the clatter of horses' hoofs approaching or departing, intimated that a smuggling craft was in the bay, and that foreign silks, lace, wine, and brandy were in the contraband market. Burns listened, and spoke, too, with freedom and earnestness, but kept a sharp lookout seaward; Morison desired to go inland; a secret yearning of soul had brought him on a hurried pilgrimage to his native place, and to go and return without the knowledge of all, save his mother, was his dearest wish. He trusted much to the obscurity of night; to the dress which he wore; to his altered looks, for the lad had risen into the man; and above all, he had confidence in his own judgment, and resolved to remain with the poet, till all who came in quest of contraband commodities retired. “If I can but elude the eyes and ears of Nickie Neevison,” he said to himself, “I despair not of baffling others.”

As this was passing through his mind, up came the heiress of Fourmerkland: “Ah! Mattie Anderson,” said Burns, “this is kind of you: the night is raw, the place itself cozie, and here have you come to cheer me with your bright eyes and witty tongue.”

“Deed,” exclaimed the heiress, “I come on nae sic daft errand; ye ken yerself that keeping company wi’ you gies ane a heeze in sang, but disna improve ane’s reputation; if ye misdoubt me, ask bonnie Jane Lotimer, the lassie wi’ the lint-white locks.”

“I care not, and I inquire not, what has brought you,” replied the poet; “but here you are—your looks would make the longest night seem short.”

“I tell ye now and for ever mair,” said the heiress, “that all yere fine winnowed words are lost on me: I care for nane of your fule sangs; ye mauna think to carry me aff my feet wi’ the charm of verse; there was a lad—Morison Roldan by name—wha made sic sangs about me as wad hae wiled

the lark frae the firmament—I heeded them as I did the breeze that waved but my locks and flew by me.”

The poet glanced his eye on Morison, who stood in the shadow of a cross, raised by one of his ancestors to commemorate his safe return from a military pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and thus continued the conversation.

“Weel, Mattie, I’ll no dispute wi’ ye in matters of taste; I dare say ye are as right in disregarding my sangs as ye were in scorning Morison’s; but I have heard his genius in verse praised; can ye repeat me one of his lyrics? what did he say of the fair lass of Fourmerkland?”

Loud laughed the heiress, and replied: “Mony a fine fule thing he said o’ me, weel I wot, but they gaed in at ae lug and out at the tither; d’ye think that my memorie’s sic an ass as to burden itself with idle verse? but I am wasting time, and time’s precious; now, Rob, ye mauna stand in the way; I ken ye are a kindly man; I hear there’s a smuggling craft in the bay, and gin this be the captain, I wad speak a private word with him; I am likely to be married soon, and want some lace cheap, and maybe a drap of brandy; be civil, and ye shall come to the bridal.”

Morison could have wished himself somewhere else, yet the conversation was not uninteresting to him, and of this Burns seemed to be aware, for he cunningly prolonged the colloquy, and kept turning it back on bygone things, when it seemed about to move onward. “We will look to that belyve, Mattie,” he said; “I’ll no stand in yere road, only ye maun countenance the matter wi’ a kiss, by way of eries.”

“Ye are a’ alike,” said Mattie; “a kiss is but a touch, and a touch makes fules fain: ye shall have half a dozen gif ye let me get a riving bargain; and now I think on’t, if ye will let me pass for a friend of yours, the captain there will be the mair liberal.”

“Aweel,” said Burns, “it shall be as ye wish; he’s a foreigner, and kens nae mair what we say than a laverock kens of the language of a linnet. Which of my muses would ye desire to personate? the lassie wi’ the lint-white locks—or Anna with hair like melted gold—or the gentle Mrs. Mac? But first let me measure your waist, and then yere mouth for a sang: by my soul its a sweet ane! but ye come from the hills where the honey’s rife.”

The heiress of Fourmerkland was not, perhaps, prepared for this unceremonious salute of the poet, which was bestowed with hearty good will: she started from him, and wiping her lips with the palms of her hands, exclaimed, “Ye impudent ne’er-doweel, how dare ye to meddle wi’ me? I’m nane o’ yere limmers, light of character, and havings—I’m nane of your umquhile maidens, with locks either lint-white or gowden—and Mrs. Mac! ye mak weel: are ye no ashamed of yersel’, wi’ a douce wife, ay, and a weel-faured

ane, at hame, to pickle in ither fowk's powk-nook! Ye maun be meddling with a dounce lass, widely respecket and weel connecket, wha comes wi' nae other protection but her ain innocence to the seashore, to buy a gaud or twa, to mense her at kirk or at market!"

"Come, come, Mattie, my bonnie ane," said the poet, "be na sae proud and sae scornfu'. Ye made mouths at poor Morison Roldan, the cleverest, ay, and the handsomest youth that ever wet a foot in Nith or Dee: ye'll maybe live to see the day on which ye will rae this taste: have ye not heard that Morison has risen to high distinction in another land? he is equal to lord or earl, and the lady whom he loves may wear more gowd on her kirtle than would buy a baron's land."

The heiress cracked her thumbs and cried, "I wadna gie the worth of a deaf nit for the truth o' the intelligence; I ken Morison owre weel to think that he'll ever rise to what ye ca' distinction. Of a' the lads I ever saw he was the least purpose like: no but he could make a fraise about ane, and lay on the lip and do weel enough in the dark; but oh, to see him in candlelight, he couldna do a hand's turn; he tried ae night to fasten a souple to the handstaff—ye might as well hae set the cat to cast a skipper's knot: he took up a stick and whate, and whate, and whate—he whate it a' to chips—he couldna make a pudding pin on't! naebody but a poet like you wad believe't. No, he'll never do weel, take my word for't; an he were an earl the morn he wad cast away the coronet afore night, as he threw away Howeboddom."

"Ah! but my fair lass of Fourmerkland," said the bard, "men in France are not weighed in your balance. When Morison comes owre the sea with gold in his left hand and diamonds on his right, and with the proudest of the land at his bridle rein, what will bonnie Mattie say? tear after tear will she drap, sigh after sigh will she heave; she'll think how she has marred her ain fortune, and become the wife of a born gomerl, when she might have been the lady of one whom princes must bow to, and who will have kingdoms to give away. Ah, Mattie! ye have knotted yere soul up in the purse that holds your father's gold."

The heiress began to tire of this unprofitable chat. "Ye Mattie weel," she said, "naebody but my ain mither ventures to call me other than Miss Anderson; but the words of a poet are to be heeded nae mair than the sough of the Solway. Will ye speak to the captain about yon, yea or nay? But bide awee: ye will speak sae unlike a man of the earth that I shall even venture on him myself. Captain," she continued, raising her voice, "I want twelve yards of yere broadest lace, and twa ankers of yere best brandy; and if ye'll send them quietly in the howe of the night to Fourmerkland, the bearer shall get the siller." As she made this pro-

posal she went close up to Morison; he was increased in stature, and his face, touched by foreign suns, had lost its bloom, while the curled mustache on his upper lip concealed the smile which played about the corners of his mouth, as his old bargain-making sweetheart instructed him in matters of brandy and lace. It was the wish of Morison, as we have already said, to continue concealed: he bowed graciously to this offer; held out his finger in the direction of Fourmerkland, and taking a small packet from his bosom placed it in her hand, then turning abruptly away walked down to the shore.

The heiress undid the packet. It contained Brussels lace worthy of a duchess. She looked at this treasure by the light of the moon, then she glanced after the retiring figure of Morison, and stepping up to Burns, said, "I was right: I am seldom wrang in my estimate of man's character: there's a present of broad lace weel worth a guinea a yard. It was nae smuggler gied me that: it could be naeboddy else and was naeboddy else save my auld jo, Morison. How he has come by it wha kens; but light come light gane: he wad gie away a principality the day, though he should beg his bread through't the morn. What a luck it was that I didna hearken to him!"

Here was a young and beautiful woman, with all the symptoms of confirmed and concentrated selfishness upon her. The bard regarded her as a curiosity: "Mattie, my bonnie bird," said he, "ye ken what's what; ye ken what side o' the bread the butter's on. Oh, don't be alarmed; I only held out my hand by way of illustrating my words; I winna touch ye."

"Ay," said the heiress, "and how am I to ken that! ye ca' me yere bonnie bird, and ye put forth yere hand, as if ye fain wad catch me; but I'm no the bird to be caught wi' chaff."

"I called ye bird, Mattie; but I didna mean lark, nor linnet, nor goldfinch, nor any of the winged children of song; no, you are but a magpie, and your food is garbage."

"Oh, sirs!" cried the heiress, "but we are scornful! I have seen mony a magpie enjoying the free air of heaven when the linnet and the goldfinch were mourning in a cage. Take ye that, ye plackless ballad-maker."

"By my soul!" exclaimed the poet, when the heiress was gone, "but she has spunk in her, in spite of all her selfishness. Well, Morison, you hear that you are still considered so thoroughly a poet—so possessed with the infirmities of the bardic clan—that good fortune to you will be but as a snare; come, you had better

'Quat the spurtle-blade and dog-skin wallet,

and take your station among the sons of song—the children of light.”

“Were this,” said the other, “uttered in seriousness, I should think of a serious answer. I regard it in the language of the same national poet whom you have quoted, as

‘Ironie satire sidlens sklentet
On my puir music.’

But I must be gone; time presses and time calls.”

“Stay,” said the poet, laying his hand on the arm of Morison, “stay, we part not thus: it is not every night that the wind wafts me a man after my own heart—a softer, a gentler, a more chivalrous, a—happier Burns.”

The face of the bard, as he said this, brightened like a summer morn: his ploughman stoop was gone: he stood erect, while his eyes, swimming in liquid light, were fixed on Morison’s glowing face, and seemed to look through him, and read all that was in his soul. “I speak,” continued the poet, “from knowledge, and not at random: I have known you long; all your thoughts, all your acts, were from a boy of a poetic order; you loved the lonely shores, the ruined towers, the lonesome glens, and the fairy waterfalls. I have seen you on the high stone of the tottering tower of your ancestors; I have seen you on the slenderest branch of the tallest tree in the glen, herrying the hooded crows’ nest because no other boy dared to do it, and because it had robbed a thrush of her young; I have seen you swimming in the midnight tide of the Solway, when the wind howled among Siddick rocks, and the lightning was kindling with its flashes the agitated waters from Allanbay to Arbigland; and I have seen you confounding one much your superior in age and in strength, because he had tyrannized over the weak and the motherless. Your genius and enthusiasm soon took the shape of song; I do not mean that you wrote harmonious verse to melodious tunes, and that the words at the ends of the lines corresponded in look and sound. No; your songs were of another stamp; in them there was romantic feeling, natural language, and a loftiness of sentiment as high above the common run of rustic verse as Criffel is above Drumroof. It is from knowledge, therefore, I entreat you to abide with us, and lift the banner of poesie in your native Scotland.”

“You have spoken plainly, and I see by your looks, sincerely,” replied Morison; “I will not deny that I once indulged in poetic dreams, and thought how glorious it was to live remembered as Burns will be, by the melodious lips of beauty. But intercourse with the world has changed my thoughts; a career of another kind is opened to me—not second to that of song, but superior to it.”

“Ay, indeed!” answered Burns; “and what may this

career be, if one may ask? Remember that the sons of song are at the head of earthborn genius."

"All honour to the children of inspiration!" answered Morison; "but I hold, that he who strives to pull down crowned tyranny, and restore freedom to mankind, attempts a nobler and more glorious thing, than he who writes an epic or a drama."

"Ay, but," replied the poet, "in the recovery of freedom, blood will be shed like water; in the reclamation of birth-right, the life, as well as liberty of others, will be endangered; kings and earls hold presumptuous rank, but the rank has descended to them, and surely we are not to strike a man's head off, because a bit of gold has happened to drop on it?"

Morison disengaged his arm from that of the poet, stepped a step back, and said: "If princes and peers refuse to see what is best for mankind, their eyes must be opened, and since they will not yield to a gentle shake, their wakening must be a rough one. You wish me to rank among poets, my wish is to rank among patriots; you desire me to pour my soul out in songs, my desire is to pour out all my energy in the battle of freedom against tyranny; and in that strife I have already felt a rapture, which all the ecstasy of poetic inspiration cannot equal; the hour is at hand, in which I shall return to it."

"Alas! alas! my young friend," said Burns, "these are the dreams of a poetic imagination; the world which you seek to renovate is cold, selfish, and cruel; you will find, when the tyrant, with a crown on his head, has disappeared, that ten will start up in his place; the cunning will outwit you; the selfish will abandon you, and the ambitious will use your talent to achieve their own ends: the three-fourths of mankind are grovelling wretches, fit only for the curb and the spur: the poetic empire for me!" And he looked rapturously to the sky, and strode up and down the beach, kicking the shells and pebbles like chaff.

"Oppression subdued poetry within me," said Morison, "and made me what I am. Yes, the time is, perhaps, not distant, when the proud nobles of this isle will have cause to reflect on their deeds of injustice, their pride, which would not allow them to repair, by marriage, the wrongs they had wrought by love, or call the unhappy offspring of their cruel gallantry child; the sword is whetted and the cannon are cast: ay, and the master-mind is in action that can accomplish it all. And why should not Burns lend a hand? it was his verse which first poured this Solway-tide of freedom into my soul."

"Because," said the poet, "I wish not to wet a Scottish gowan with Scottish blood; we have many wrongs, but we shall repair them by the giant force of fair and steady remon-

strance, by honest wishes, frankly and boldly expressed; I seek for no foreign help in this: I would rather continue a slave to a Briton, than take my freedom from a foreigner, and I will tell you why: against the former I should hope to prevail by force or persuasion, the latter could only come for his own ends, and his object would be to maintain his system of patronage, to use a soft word, for the increase of his own power. As for going abroad to fight for other nations like a gladiator, such a step is too humiliating for Burns."

"Abide where you are, then," exclaimed Morison, "and take the fate which awaits you. You despise the patriotism—the largeness of soul—which fights the battle of human nature on a foreign soil, and desire me to raise the banner of Scottish poetry. Has not the great, the rapturous poet who stands before me raised that banner, and what is the upshot?"

'Ganging auld wives' barrels, onon the day!'

The patriot dies on the field of battle, and with the shout of victory in his ear; the poet, harassed by contemptible critics, insulted by the wealthy and titled, and scorned by the vulgar low, as well as the vulgar lofty, dies on the bed of poverty, amid the cries of his children for bread. Nay, should his country, in a fever-fit of mercy, resolve to patronise poetry, such is the taste of those in the high places that the undeserving will receive the honours due to the meritorious. Burns is a gauger, but Pye is poet laureate. No! poetry is not for me; I could not endure the insolence of rank, nor the pity of critics; rather let me hasten back whence I came, and seek, with my comrades in arms, to restore the order of nature, fulfil the designs of Providence, and make the world one vast republic, where the highest genius shall have the highest honour."

The face of the poet brightened as a dark cloud when the sun is behind it. "May God," he exclaimed, "in his mercy to mankind send it! but he must send it soon, else Burns will not live to see it. Farewell." And suddenly separating himself from his companion, he sauntered along the shore, and was presently heard humming a Scottish air, and measuring out words to it—words amid which that sacred word liberty was frequently repeated.

CHAPTER V.

I wad gie a' my lands and rents
 I had that lady within my stents;
 I wad gie a' my lands and towers
 I had that lady within my bowers.

Scottish Ballad.

WHILE this occurred on the seashore, Lord Roldan was on his way to the Elfin-glen, resolved on an interview with Mary Morison. This was no hasty resolution; for some time he had been meditating how to avert the ruin which seemed, for lack of male heirs, to impend over his house and name. He considered that he was advancing in years and approaching the period when all the life of love is gone: since the failure of his negotiation with the fantastic Lady Vane he had relinquished the idea of providing his estate with an heir by the usual method of matrimony. He began to think that he had behaved unwisely and cruelly to a woman every way but his equal, and barbarously to his son. His pride had hitherto hindered Lord Roldan from thinking of Mary as his wife, but to the want of an heir, we may add unsubdued love; the rude shaking which the French revolution had given to the settled notions of the island, as well as the high deeds ascribed to his son. These and other causes induced him to look often towards the Elfin-glen and soften his feelings towards its still beloved inhabitant.

The shealing and glen of our earlier pages had now an altered look: a house resembling a little rustic temple which Morison saw on the banks of the Rhine had replaced the humble shed, but the plan had been so contrived as to enclose as a shrine the chamber in which the mother and son had passed so many solitary days. In this small room nothing had been disturbed; the schoolbooks, nay, the playthings of the boy were there; the fishing-rods which he loved to make and use, the cages which he had fashioned with some skill to hold the thrushes which it was his delight to rear, even his attempts at verse, all were preserved, and to a close observer some of them might be seen marked with the tears which the mother had shed for the loss of her boy. All around, the natural beauty of the place had been augmented without injuring its picturesque splendour, the road to the Elfin cavern was planted with flowers, the little silver spring in the interior was enclosed in hewn stone, and a place was made for her attendant maidens to sit at the entrance without exposure to sun or shower; while Mary herself indulged

her feelings in the interior, and read or prayed as she felt affected.

Let not our readers start at the change we have intimated. It was Morison's pride and delight to enable his mother to appear without reproach among the proud and well dressed dames of Caledonia. Of silks, jewels, and money he sent her not a little, and intimated too, as a secret which he desired her to keep, that he would one day surprise her with a visit notwithstanding the war which now separated him from his native land. This change did not, however, take place without remark. When a silken gown superseded one of linseywoolsey, and rings of gold with diamonds in them, appeared in place of those of humbler metal, "See!" cried one dame to another, "see how fine madam of the glen's gown! My certie, her tumble has turned out a fortunate ane! it's no every maiden that rises the mair beauteous frae her misfortune. There she goes rustling in her silks nae less, and wi' her diamond rings;

'Three for ilka finger, and twa for ilka thumb.'

If I thought sic gude fortune wad follow, I'm no sure but I should be tempted to miss a foot myself."

The whole envy of the vale broke out like a volcano, when the little cot of the Elfin-glen was cast to the ground, and a new and elegant structure rose in its place. The first cry was, "Mary Morison's gane daft wi' the loss of her wean, and has dung down her house." The second cry was, "What can a' thae pedestals and pillars mean! It canna be a kirk, for where's the stipend to come frae! and it canna be a palace, for where's the princess to put into it?" But when the copingstone of the whole was laid, and Mary was seen walking about accompanied by her maidens, there was a general outburst of, "And this is the way she takes to make us forget her faults and follies; saw ye ever sic pride! a pillared haddin and two hempie hand maidens. Had she made it like the repentance stool there wad hae been sense in it; but she has recorded her shame in lime and stane, and made it monumental."

As Lord Roldan approached lights streamed from every window, and figures were seen to move from room to room. It was the anniversary of the day on which Mary had first heard from her son after his disappearance: Jeanie Rabson and Nanse Halberson were there, and a sort of grand inquest was held on the presents which Morison had sent home. "I never saw sic things wi' my een!" said the heiress of Howeboddum; "there's silks of all hues, satins of all samples, and jewels mair than Susan Pye wore."

"Oh Mary, woman!" exclaimed Nanse, "this Morison of thine is not only an honour to thee, but will be ane to the

wide world. I aye took him for a boy by ordinar, but wha could have dreamed of this? And oh! to think that he has nae forgot the auld witch wife: mony a time I wished myself a real witch for his sake, and thine too Mary; but witchcraft couldna hae done what he has done for himself."

"Nae doubt," replied Mary; "but my heart rejoices, and that I feel the kindness of God in turning a misery into an honour; a black sin into a shining light. Yet oh! it wrings my heart that my bonnie boy is no fighting in the ranks of his ain countrymen, but is become a leader and a chief among the French, who cut off kings' heads as they would the heads of common fowk, and have pulled down baith throne and altar."

"Hout," said Jeanie Rabson, "sae long as Morison's no fighting against his ain kith and kin it's little matter wha he's fighting against; and if he did sae, poor fellow, I havena the heart to blame him, for he was sadly used. But, Mary, that satin gown becomes ye; do try on this plumed turban—I wonder where Morison picked it up! He has been warring wi' the Turk, and, therefore, is nae muckle to blame. Now, I insist on't, ye maun try on this real cashmere shawl, the like o't was never seen in Glengarnock; and I'll e'en fix on this jewel, it has a light o' its ain like the moon. Nanse Halberson, dinna ye think our Mary was born to be a lady?"

As Jeanie Rabson uttered this a hasty step was heard in the entrance, the door opened, and Lord Roldan stood before them. The heirsch of Howeboddum shook, to use her own simile, like the leaf o' the linn; Nanse Halberson looked on him as if she would have looked through him; while Mary Morison stepped forward and said, "None save the worthy presume to enter here: begone!"

Lord Roldan gazed on her for a few minutes' space; the colour rose in his cheeks; it was evident that he was equally amazed and delighted: the first words he uttered were, "Old woman, your words are just—Mary was born to be a lady!"

"I aye said it would come to this," murmured Jeanie Rabson; "she'll be the lady of the land yet, and weel will she set it an' it were a principedom."

"Lord Roldan," said Mary with a calm dignity, "what is the purpose of your visit? This is the anniversary of my bairn's delivery from thralldom; you cannot be come to share in our joy! Begone, I say! Heaven is merciful, else the very pillars of this house would fall and crush ye where ye stand."

"Mary!—Mary Morison," he said, with a voice as soft as the gentlest music, "I come neither to insult you nor to share in your joy, though, believe me, I feel it. I come to do an act of justice—an act of justice did I say! I come to

claim a right, and I am glad that there are witnesses to my words, as to my actions."

"Oh!", exclaimed Mary with some bitterness, "let me summon my maidens; let me call in the people of this wide vale; a strange thing is about to happen—Lord Roldan is going to do an act of justice! We all have heard of his cruelty, and some have felt it; but his justice! that is something new." So saying she sat down, motioning her two companions to seats. "Girls," said she, addressing her maidens, whom curiosity or alarm had brought into the room, "be seated: something terrible is to happen—Lord Roldan is about to be just!"

The brow of Lord Roldan was for a moment darkened, but he had an aim in coming which he had no wish to miss—he spoke calmly. "My house and name are of old standing, and they are both honoured in the land yet: we have, indeed, erred—nay, sinned; but our errors were rather the offspring of our station than of our heart; the accident of our birth than a settled purpose of soul. If I for many years have forborne to express feelings dear to my heart, and let my bosom indulge in its own natural throbs, have I not been more than punished by the consuming fire within me?" He paused and looked round.

The heiress of Howeboddom said with a smile, "If your lordship had spoken aye in that mysterious way it might have been better for some of the lasses o' this land: but ye have come to do a deed of justice—go on."

"The thing," continued his lordship, "which my heart often whispers me to do was as often forbidden by a mother's pride and by the vanity of high descent. Mary, have you forgot the hours of love and joy, and mutual vows passed in this fairy cottage and in the Elfin-cavern? have you forgot how we took the moon with all her stars, the stream with all its beauty, and the flowers with all their fragrance to witness that we were united in heart and soul?"

"Forgot them!" said Mary in a low voice, "that is impossible! the memory of those moments is branded on my heart; I wish I could forget them. When I succeed in banishing them from my thoughts by day they return to me at night in dreams: nay, the music of the burn, the melody of the birds, the blossoming of the hawthorn, and the fragrance of the honeysuckle, all unite in reminding me of my errors, and in impressing on my heart a calm loathing for him who wooed long and eloquently to win a heart that he might rend it and trample upon it. Say on: ye hear that I still remember the days of my youth, and the music of ten thousand vows made but to be broken."

"Yes, Mary," his lordship continued, "but I wish you to do more—I wish you to think that I am not so base a being as the world deems me—I wish you to think, that

while I could not master my love, I was under the tyranny of a stern mother, and custom and pride more tyrannical still. Mary, what is your opinion: can we release ourselves from vows and oaths, uttered before that God whose presence fills the universe! have we power to absolve ourselves of sacred obligations! No! I say we have no such power, unless we are mutually agreed, and that mutual agreement has never been—can never be—for who would act so basely to their own honour and their own heart!"

"Lord Roldan," replied Mary, "before I hear any more, I shall leave you for a few minutes; there is a monitor whom I must consult, one to whom I had recourse when you forsook me, and but for three friends, left desolate—two of those friends are before you, the third is an invisible one, but he hath ears." She retired as she spoke to her little chamber; kissed, and clasped to her bosom the bonnet of her son, together with one or two of his favourite books, took her head-dress off, and allowing her locks to flow free, she knelt with bared knees on the cold stone, and laying her forehead on her palms, addressed a prayer with touching earnestness to God, desiring his help and protection in a conflict which she perceived near, between her duty to her own character and the feelings of youth, which were still strong within her; she again and again prayed that her own treacherous heart might not be allowed to shake the settled purpose of her soul, and that neither rank nor wealth—nor lingering love might prevail against truth and honour. She returned to the room with a tranquil look, and resumed her seat, saying, "If there is more to be said let me hear it, but be brief; this evening is dedicated to thoughts of the absent, and I desire it may not be much further intruded on."

Lord Roldan was interrupted in his answer by the entrance of Nickie Neevison, who approached at a dancing step, cracking her thumbs and crooning the old song of "Wha's that at my bower door!" No sooner did she see his lordship and cast her eye on the splendid dress of Mary Morison, than she exclaimed, "My certie, my sang's in season, and I'm in time—here's a bridal towards! ay, ay, lang looked for's come at last, they're far ahin that daurna follow, wha wad haeth ought o' this now! Lord! but if Lady Winnifred gat an inkling of this, she wad make a stir in her cerements; it wadna be the guilty coffin, nor yet the twa ell deep o' mools, that wad keep her frae bestowing a blessing on her only son, for buckling himself to ane of her menials. But gang on wi' yere wooing—will yere lordship let me get a look at the bridal ring! Poor Presbyterian Mally, there, disna want it, but yere lordship's religion canna make sicker wark without it; and I wad counsel ye, Mary, woman, to see that all is right and tight: his lordship is a souple ane."

The rattling talk of Nickie was a relief to all present; but to none more than to Lord Roldan himself: he felt that she had touched on one or two points, which he had hardly dared to have done himself without some circumlocution, and was even thankful, though some of her random words gave great pain. There ensued a pause, which none seemed disposed to interrupt—Nickie, however, was at no loss. "I maun learn my paes and my ques now," she continued, "ere I approach the Elfin palace, as I aye ca' this homestead; I maun learn to hinge and to beck, and say how's a' wi' my lady, and will yere ladyship allow me to say that your ladyship's head-gear is awry, and yere cockernonie dung a wee ajee. And wherefore no begin now! ye set yere new silks and yere coming honours weel, my lady; some folks say ye are born to be ane; but if ye are ane, it's nae matter whether ye were born till't or no, and it's mair creditable that ye wan it by yere ain good looks. But what signifies being a lady, I wadna wonder if Morison—our Morison I aye ca' him, made ye a princess." Nickie now imagined she had said enough to entitle her to a seat, which she assumed accordingly, regardless of the discouraging glances of the heiress of Howeboddom, and the forbidding looks of Nanse Halberson. Mary Morison had, indeed, no desire that she should go away; Nickie was never in any haste to begone from any fireside of the vale; this was not unknown to Nanse, who set about to obtain by stratagem what she could not accomplish by persuasion.

Now our readers must understand, that honest Nickie, though an outspoken person, with a tongue which spared no one either in affection or anger, lived nevertheless in a sort of acknowledged dread of Nanse, whose power over standing corn, milch cows, and verse, as well as over man and woman, she never for a moment doubted; on this the other relied, and spoke accordingly: "On this night, the moon will be in her place of power, and I hae a darg to do, that hands canna perform for me. But the place in whilk it maun be wrought lies distant, and I maun find some feteer medium than my ain feet for carrying me."

"Wherefore no," said Jeanie Rabson, "take honest baudron's there, winking at the fireside, or gang and pou yersel a bonnie ragwort, and cry up horsie and mount! But will ye tell me, Nanse, does the auld tryste still haud gude atween his dark reverence and the witches on Locherbrigg hill?"

"Oh, atweel, it hauds gude," replied the other; "I hae seen, on a Hallowmass eve, the midnight air, as fou o' warlocks and witches as ever ye saw it fou o' wild geese. An' ye put a rowan tree owre yere brow, I'se let ye see me mounting nigh the starns this very night, ay, and yese ken the filly I ride on." As she uttered these last words, she

I watered with my tears, the trees which she loved to sit beneath I counted as things holy, and her very shadow as she passed to and fro within her cottage window sent a throb to my heart, such as highborn beauty never commanded. Nay, I have glided like a spectre to her door and blessed her when I heard her voice calmly lifted up in prayer : she prayed for her son, she prayed to be strengthened, and oh ! had she but prayed for me, my pride, my vanity might have been subdued, and happiness had flown back to me on the wings of love."

"My lord ! my lord !" exclaimed Mary, not a little moved at this touching appeal, "you but waste your words and throw away your time. When you broke your vows, when you neglected even to own your son, when you left me to meet the scorn of the world, and harder still, its pity, how does your lordship think I fitted myself to endure such immeasurable suffering ? I threw myself on my knees, I held up my hands, for I dared not hold my head to heaven, and I entered into a covenant with the Most High, that my future life should be dedicated to purity and religion, that to man with all his eloquence I should no more listen. It is vain, therefore, my lord, that you come at the eleventh hour ; the time is past ; the rocks of the Elfin-glen will start from their places and choke up that burn before I change my mind."

Jeanie looked first at Lord Roldan and then at Mary, and wondered how all this was to end.

"Mary," said he, "your anger was just, but you are not just to me when you say you were utterly neglected."

She rose suddenly, strode over the floor till within arm's length of him, and exclaimed, "False lord ! will you dare to tax me with injustice ? Did you not basely retract your vows ? Did you not basely obtain your own written words recording us husband and wife ? Where are they now, my lord ? And did you not basely and inhumanly cause my beloved boy to be taken as a slave to a foreign land lest he should grow up and call you to account for your villany to his mother ? How dare you tax me with injustice !"

Lord Roldan, to the astonishment of all present, maintained his equanimity of temper : he seemed to have made up his mind for every emergency. "Did I own myself guilty of all you say, what then ?" he answered. "According to your own acknowledgment, they were the errors of a husband—of a husband who now comes to ask forgiveness of his wife. Surely, Mary, you cannot imagine that my follies have dissolved, like ice in the sun, the willing chains in which we bound ourselves. We were husband and wife ; there was a written record of it signed with the names of Lord Roldan and Mary Morison. It can be found—ay, and though the journey is far and dangerous, it shall be found. Mary, look on me ; say that you are my wife, and come and rule and

reign a lady where there have been many more highly born, but none so lovely and so worthy."

Jeanie Rabson sprang up, and hastily laying her hand on Mary's mouth, proceeded with many a sob to remonstrate, "You shall not say no till ye are mair yeresel—till ye have had leisure for consideration. Oh, Mary!" she whispered, "ask yere ain heart, and attend to its throbs; it is a dumb but a true counsellor. Here you will be made at once an honest woman and a lady of rank; and what is mair nor a', our ain blessed Morison will be nae langer the baseborn brat that this could remorseless warld ca'd him."

"Jeanie," said Mary, in her usual tone of voice, "ye have urged in three words all that can be urged. With regard to myself, I receive this offer as a proof that I have as a woman and a mother comported myself in a way which Lord Roldan thinks worthily of; it is a testimony in my favour; but I refuse this offer, though it promises to cleanse the stain from my name, and raise me to a place of honour, because I was cast away and rejected; the reed on which I leaned was treacherously snapped in twain; the vows on which my simplicity relied were broken all at once; and—"

Lord Roldan here seized her hand, and tried to retain it, but she wrung it from him by a sudden effort, and seating herself, waved him to be gone. "No," he said, "I shall not go; I depart not till I have regained what I have lost; till that love for me revives within you, which once gave music to your speech and light to your eyes, and was to you as an inspiration. I have offered you rank—will you tell me that you love not such distinction, when I know that you desire to be placed among the proudest dames of the vale, and when I see you attired like a lady, as if it were in anticipation of it? I have offered you that honoured seat in the halls of Roldan which even princesses have been proud to obtain; and will you tell me that you love not that which takes away the reproach from you, and makes you a companion for the haughtiest in the peerage?"

"Alas! my Lord Roldan," said Mary, "you are seeking to set up a poor broken heart as an idol for worship; you are seeking to deck a corse with bridal flowers. Shall I tell you all? When you broke through all your vows, and deserted me, I sat stupified and motionless, for I could not believe such evil of you; but the moment the reality flashed upon me, my heart gave one leap, and then lay still; but from that one leap it has never recovered. No, my lord, go home and kneel down, and seek the God of your fathers in prayer. Ay, pray, my lord; wrestle with your Maker: let the tears flow; dry them not. On your brow the finger of death has already set the sign; over mine, too, that finger has passed; our bridal garments are those of the grave; our waiting

maidens are skeletons—and the sheets 'neath which we will repose are grass-green, and embroidered with gowans."

Lord Roldan passed his hand over his eyes; the tears dropped fast through between his fingers. "Mary," he said, "why should dreams of happiness be but a veil to the grave? We are yet young, and if I desire to live, it is as much to have the double benefit of true repentance and your sweet company, as for the sake of life itself. Your imaginings arise from your loneliness. Bethink you how much otherwise it will be when you mingle with the other titled ones of the isle; how agreeable the sound will be of welcomings from royal lips, and how joyful the sight when your son, already honoured in a foreign land, obtains increase of honour in his own. Come, give me your hand, and there shall be such rejoicings in my halls and thine as have not been since Bruce feasted there after the day of Bannockburn."

"If she can resist this," whispered Jeanie to Nanse, "she's either mair than woman or less; for woman, weel I wat, she canna be."

"All this," replied Mary, with much composure, "comes too late. How could I hold up my head among the far-descended matrons of the land with my load of shame upon me! The purest and the loveliest of my condition in society would have to endure, in such an elevation, the sneers, the scorn, and the frozen looks of her sister worms. And oh! twenty years ago I had prepared myself to endure them, but the trial was not to be—and assuredly Mary Morison shall not tempt it. No: Roldan, I forgive you; I have long forgiven you for the misery you have caused; but, in forgiving you, I dismissed all thoughts of you other than as a man worthy of being utterly forgotten. So begone! therefore tempt me no more. My resolution has been long taken."

Lord Roldan paced from side to side of the chamber in great agitation; he now looked at Mary, who sat as composed as a statue and as white as marble; he then glanced at Jeanie, who was evidently embarrassed. To her the proposal was unlooked-for, and the refusal equally unexpected. He then looked out on the night, as if hoping to see some sign in the heavens above, or to hear some sound from the earth beneath, to encourage him, paused, and seemed making up his mind for a final effort.

"Mary," said Jeanie Rabson, "will ye not allow him the benefit of repentance? The man that wranged ye offers to right ye; he has come, indeed, at the eleventh hour; but an' he be sent by God, I see na how ye may resist his will without the sin of presumption. Indeed, I think ye are o'er stiff and self-confident, Mary; it will not lessen yere hopes in heaven to be made an honest woman on earth. And though it may bring but small increase of happiness to your bosom, why refuse to bring peace to the bosom of a fellow-creature, wha

sues for it as if he were pleading for final mercy, and who, erroneous as his conduct has been, always loved you!"

"And are you joined against me too, Jeanie?" she answered; "I expected not this. He has always loved me, you say. No! he loves his own pride and his far-descended house far better, and is come to persuade me to commit another act of folly that his name may remain in the land."

He snatched her hand, and kept it by main force. "I ask but justice, since I am not to have mercy. We are married. Oh, say but that word! you cannot deny it; you are silent. You are, then, lady of my hall, and your son and mine is the master of Roldan."

She rose from her seat, disengaged her hand from his grasp, and said, "When you gave away, with a laugh at my credulity—or when you destroyed, with a smile at my duped vanity—the written record of our vows, then, my lord, you threw away all claim of your own. Where is it! till I see it my name is Mary Morison. I am not your wife; my son is not the master of Roldan: he is what the cruelty of his father made him—a—why should I hesitate to use a word my poor boy was doomed so long to endure!—a bastard!"

She seemed ready to sink as she uttered this; but Morison suddenly came in, and clasping her in his arms, exclaimed, "My noble mother, I am your bastard boy still!"

CHAPTER VI.

Some are born great: some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.—SHAKESPEARE.

For a minute's space Mary seemed dead; her colour returned, her eyes opened, and throwing her arms round Morison's neck and flooding his bosom with tears, she sobbed, "My son, my son, my blessed son!" she then held him at arms' length and gazed him o'er and o'er. "Oh! my bairn, God has been kind to you! is it not wonderful that as ye are now, so did you come to me in dreams, taller, stronger, manlier than when you were torn from me on that unhappy night."

Jeanie Rabson had now her arm round his neck, "And have ye forgot me, Morison!" she said with a brightening eye: "mony a time, lad, have I nursed ye on my knee and platted ye swords of rushes; little did I think ye wad take to a sword of steel; but who can resist their fate?"

Morison saluted the heiress of Howeboddum with much affection, and then said, "Ha! my auld witch-wife, Nanse!

many a time in the heat of battle have I chanted your old ballads and fought the better for it."

"Oh Morison, man!" exclaimed Nanse, "but I am glad to see ye, and to hear that ye remembered the auld witch-wife and her fighting ballads. Speak to me this way, now did ye ever chant the ballad about ane o' yere ain ancestors, a lord of Roldan who carried away May Musgrove frae Allan-bay?"

"No," said Morison with a darkening brow; "what the lords of Roldan have done I have striven to forget." As he said this he turned round and confronted Lord Roldan: both seemed anxious to speak, but neither seemed willing to begin.

Another actor suddenly entered upon the scene; this was Dominie Milligan. "Ah, lad!" cried he, embracing Morison, "I got a glance o' ye as I was pondering on my great work called 'Man and Machinery,' and I tarried only to commit the idea with which I was then burdened to paper before I hurried after. Had ye been a son of my ain I couldna hae mourned yere departure mair, or rejoiced mair at yere return. So, have ye come to set up yere staff and abide amang us? I have acquired much since I saw you that I long to communicate; for, of a verity, of all the youth that studied under me, thou wert the quickest and aptest."

As the dominie was unloosing his hands, the arms of Nickie Neevison replaced them. "Love for thee, lad!" she cried, "has mastered fear: what care I for the starkest witch in a' Glengarnock—and there she sits—when I see you. Haith! but I was in an unco penushion, expecting nae less than to be transformed into a brown filly and ridden post to the moon, and was e'en muttering a bit prayer, when I saw a shape gae by that saw nae me. I kenned the air of thee, Morison, amang a million, and I called out, but sae I might, ye ware nae to be stopped. But, bless the lad, how he's grown! and what braw things are these that I see glance beneath yere cloak? they hurt my arms, and I'll warrant them made of beaten gowd and precious stanes."

Morison disengaged himself with much gentleness from the embrace of Nickie, and walking up to Lord Roldan, said, "What is your pleasure? Your presence distresses my mother, and I must request you to withdraw."

"I came," said Lord Roldan, "with the hope of giving pleasure instead of inflicting pain: alas! I feel I have been the occasion of much sorrow, and I am anxious to heal, as far as they can be healed, the injuries which I have inflicted. The offence offered to yourself I can explain or extenuate: I conjure you to help me in overcoming the scruples of your mother, and enable me to welcome her as the lady of my halls, and you as my true heir."

Morison replied, "I must hear what my mother says to

this, and, perhaps, you will not think us unreasonable if we desire fewer witnesses. I have made up my own mind, indeed, but I wish my beloved mother to weigh the offer maturely, and not either to refuse or accept a proposal without consideration, on which so much depends."

"Consideration, my child!" exclaimed Mary, "what consideration is required in a question so plain? No honest, no pious mind can hesitate for a moment; if I have any doubts, they are all on thy account; for me, may no change but that which death brings happen through my weakness; it is enough to have been weak once."

Lord Roldan turned to his son, and said, "I cannot but look on your coming as fortunate—nay, providential—you will, I hope, be intercessor for me, and persuade one whom I have ever loved to do herself an act of justice."

"Speak yet more plainly," said Morison; "what mean you by an act of justice? that is something unusual: I remember but too well my visit to Roldan Castle, and the justice which I met with."

"What you came to seek I now come to offer," answered Lord Roldan; "nor need I tell you that my heart will then be at peace, my slumbers sound, and you will take your place, due by birthright, among the highest of the land."

"How much I covet, or how much I despise the rank to which you allude," was the reply, "will soon be shown, when I know what my beloved mother thinks of this proposal; how little it could be foreseen, it is needless to say."

"Oh, my son!" replied Mary, "I live but for thee; through thee I breathe; through thee this life, blighted as it has been, became endurable, and if I thought that what Lord Roldan asks would be acceptable to thee, I know not what my love for thee might tempt me to do: for my own part I desire no change: I have lived down the coldness and scorn of the world, and were I to become lady of Roldan to-morrow, the errors of my youth would be remembered anew."

"Mother, mother!" interrupted her son, "you committed no error, save giving what you could not refuse—credence to a man's oath and honour! But a crime was committed against you, when vows and oaths were left unredeemed; a second crime was committed against you, when the prayers of your son were scorned and disregarded, and he was compelled, in the bitterness of his heart, to call himself an orphan boy, who knew no parent but one."

"Na, but Morison," said Jeanie Rabson, "ye are gaun clean demented now; ye dinna ken what yere doing—ye are refusing, as fast as ye can, the lordship of Roldan, and encouraging your mother to die with the stain on her name and on your birth, instead of placing hersel' at the head of a' the ladies of Glengarnock. I wonder what the lad wad be at?"

"My son!" exclaimed Mary, proudly, "you but do me justice; I was content to brave the world with my bastard boy in my arms, and though many a stound went to my heart about it, I rejoiced to see, when ye grew up in mind and body to my hopes, that the public feeling was softening towards me. I have been denied the honours of wife till I cannot enjoy them, and all that I desire is to die Mary, the mother of Morison Roldan!"

She looked calmly and loftily as she uttered these words; Morison fell on his knees, and clasping her's, exclaimed:—"My own, my glorious mother! now I am happy; now all cause of dread is gone; for I must not conceal that I foresaw repentance or remorse would come to the heart which wronged you, and I was afraid that your affection for me might induce you to forget the deep, the indellible insult we have both sustained from him—*him*, whom I have vowed never to name, nor to look at with other eyes than those of frozen scorn. Oh! my mother, there have been statues raised to matrons less worthy than thou, and as I live I swear, that one of thee shall be put in a proud place, sculptured with the sentiment which dignifies your looks even now, and on the pedestal shall be engraved, 'Mary, the mother of Morison Roldan!'"

"Did ever onybody hear the like o' that?" said Jeanie Rabson, "we are a' gaun mad the gither; here's a country dame refuses to be a lady, and her son declares he will put up a statue to her honour. Morison, my bairn, this is waur than aught I ever heard of ye—refusing to be heir of Howeboddum was a joke till't!"

"Now, by the heavens above!" exclaimed Morison, pacing the apartment, "I am prouder to be the bastard boy of poor Mary Morison—as I have often heard myself called—whom no father would own, than if I had been heir to all Gal-
loway. It shall never be said of me, that I might be thankful my father was born before me; what I owe to fortune and to God, I shall owe on my own account; the time is come when the natural rights of man will triumph alike over the blind dotage of priestcraft and tyrannic and exclusive privileges of those who call themselves the nobly-born and the far-descended."

"Weel," cried Jeanie Rabson, "ye surprise me—wha wad hae thought that this was in ye! weafy fa' them that sent my bonnie bairn abroad; he went away wise and he's come hame mad. He just talks as they talk in France, and we a' ken where that leads to."

Lord Roldan had once or twice, during this conversation, taken a step towards the door, as if resolved to depart; he saw that it was in vain, at present, to press his offer further, and while he made up his mind to watch his time and take advantage of circumstances, he wished to become acquainted

more fully with his son's sentiments concerning the changing condition of society, and what his notions were on the great question of human freedom, which was now agitating Europe.

"Young man," he said, "since I am not to call you son—before your temples are as white as mine, you will see sufficient cause to lament your admiration of liberty and equality; the world is too corrupt, too profligate, and too selfish to permit for an hour a pure republic to be established."

Morison answered scornfully, "This person has had his answer, and yet will not begone; nay, the refusal of his offer has affected him so little, that he proposes to read the law of princes and lordlings in the matter of republics. It is perhaps enough to say that in the kingly government his majesty and his nobles divide the patronage of the land among them, and if a person humbly born, let his qualities be ever so god-like, desires that station to which his talents entitle him, he will be rudely repulsed and left to starve; in a republican government, all the genius which the nation produces is brought into action; humility of birth can be no obstacle where all are born equal. As for the profligate, there is the law to restrain them—there is the scorn of their fellow-citizens to check them; and there is the axe or the halter to remove them."

"What a capital minister he wad hae made," said Jeanie Rabson to Nanse; "what words—what words—I wonder where he finds them! wo be to the accident which turned his steps frae the pulpit. Dominie, he wad hae been great on the pomegranate."

"Oh Jeanie!" groaned the dominie, "I wonder ye can think of that even now—but whisht, my lord's about to speak."

"Yes, young man, the halter and the axe," replied Lord Roldan with something of a sneer, "have preached strongly in the cause of liberty and equality in France: there the noblest blood has been spilt like water; the law obeyed yesterday is ordered to be broken to-day, while what is honourable to-day will be dishonourable to-morrow. All is yeasty and unsettled, the most plausible talker will rule for a time, till a man of courage and action comes in and settles the principles of government—with a sword."

"And would not even that be better than a system of slavery!" exclaimed Morison; "I cannot see one man walking in livery behind another man without a shudder for the image of my Maker; wheresoever we go in this land are we not overawed by an aristocracy of wealth as well as rank? Are we not liable to be galloped over on the highway and ridden down in the streets by some titled tyrant swollen with insolence and wine? this has been too long endured, and must come to an end."

"You will but have an exchange of tyrants by the reform which you propose," replied Lord Roldan, "nor will you find the change of such easy fulfilment as you seem to imagine. The noblemen and gentlemen of Britain have never been the oppressors of the people, but their friends, nay, their brethren, and when the day of trial comes, it will be found that we will not fly like startled deer into far lands—we will stand by our order and live or die independent!" He looked up proudly when he said this, and strode over the floor as if it had been the field on which he had resolved to abide battle for the rights of his rank.

"Would it not be better and nobler," said Morison, "for the gentlemen and lords of the land to unite with their brethren hand in hand to restore man to his lost dignity? I marvel that some earls and lords are not ashamed to bear honours upon them which they neither won nor yet deserve; what merit is there in having squandered money at a horse race, lost a farm at a main of cocks, staked a fair estate on a cast of the dice, got rid of a half-year's rent in a gift to some squalling Italian, whom he is told sings well, or, more criminal still, sinking his soul, and corrupting his body in vulgar debauchery, and breaking deep vows and deeper oaths to some innocent victim, whom he found it pleasant to beguile—what merit is there in all this? yet such is the merit of many of our nobles: I speak because I know it!" He looked Lord Roldan sternly in the face as he uttered this, and seemed to say with his eyes—Can you deny it?

"Morison, Morison!" said Jeanie Rabson, "be calm, and use mair measured language; give honour where honour is due, he is baith the Lord of Roldan and your father!"

"Weel said, Jeanie, woman!" muttered the dominie, "if we allow rank to be snooled, what will become of my sway, a bairn sax year auld will clean o'ergang me."

The dark eyes of Morison flashed a keener light than usual; he replied almost fiercely, "I have never yet seen, though I have heard of a Lord of Roldan, to whom I could, without abasement, do honour, and as for a father, I have none: he departed in the dreams of my boyhood. I am without a father—such a mother as this is enough for me. But what need is there for all this talk; here am I come from a far land, and not without difficulty and danger, to see my beloved mother, to get one clasp of her arms, one kind kiss of her lips, and a blessing often given, and always coveted. I wish to be alone—nay, Jeanie and Nanse, I am alone when I have you here, so remain."

"Some folk," exclaimed Nickie Neevison, "easily forget auld friends! haith, my lad, if I had kenned ance what I ken now, I should have allowed ye to find the way through the world alone; ye needna look at me, Jeanie Rabson, na, nor Mary Morison neither; did I no seek to mend the manners o'

that ill-deedy get there ? Can he deny that I didna cuff him and ca' him bastard for clodding stanes at the gude wife of Houghmagandie's hens ? did I no ance hound all the colliers of Drumachrene after him for setting up his crest to me about our gibcat ? My certie, he ought to remember me : I'se bide here na langer since I'm no welcome ; and trouth, Lord Roldan, I wad e'en advise ye—since ye canna get mincing Mallie there—e'en to take me ; I am, may be no so weel put on, but I am nearly as weel faured, and far better tempered." Lord Roldan smiled, and seemed disposed to accompany Nickie, who moved her feet to depart, yet was reluctant to go.

While this was going on in the Elfin-glen, a drama of another kind was enacting in no distant quarter.

Hugh Heddles, Esq., of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, hastened, and that with an anxious heart, to the lonely public-house which bore the sign of the Crowned Hammer, intimating that it was kept by a son of Vulcan, who, aware of the spark in his own throat, was desirous of quenching that in the throats of others. At the door he was encountered by no less a personage than Davie Gellock himself, who, following Morison from France, was now on his way to him with a message which admitted of no delay.

"A fair evening to you, sir," said Hugh ; "are you the skipper of the Cormorant ?"

"And what an I were ?" replied Davie.

"Oh ! in that case," said the other, "I should desire a little private talk with you on two points."

"Weel," answered Davie, "there canna be a better bit than under this hollin tree—say awa."

Hugh looked east, and Hugh looked west, and Hugh looked north, and Hugh looked south. "I'm no misdoubting you, sir, but it wadna be thought creditable o' me, that's a great master manufacturer, were I seen bargaining for Flanders lace and a keg of brandy—it wadna be reckoned genteel."

"Oh ! pitch your fears to the devil, or into five fathom of water," said the redoubted Davie, "all's one for that—all are dealers in the article here, from Lord Roldan himself down to Dan Deemster the bedral."

"Now, skipper, will ye just satisfy my curiosity on one point," said Hugh ; "ye are acquainted with what's transacting in foreign parts, and have a gaye good guess of wha has and will hold the upper hand—will ye tell me, have ye heard of one Morison Roldan in any of the French ports ; word rins here that he's become a great man, and is hand and glove with the chief rulers ?"

"Rumour," said Davie, "though a lady much given to lying, is right in that : Morison is grown a great man, a leader and a chief in the army, nae less ; but is that to be wondered at ! call ye that a marvel ?"

"No, not wholly a marvel," said Hugh, "for the lad was apt in ciphers, and though addicted to verse and other follies, and a lover of loose company, he had some gumption in him, and then, when the pot boils, ye ken, the scum will float."

"It's weel for ye," replied Davie, "that Morison Roldan is out of ear shot, else he might give ye a touch of cauld steel for that same simile of the scum. But how could he miss to rise? how could he avoid ascending? Can ye hinder the lily to shoot up when the sun shines in spring? Morison had ane at his right hand to help him on—to guide, to direct, to clap him on the back and say, Morison, do this, and Morison, do that."

"An wha might that be?" said the other; "he could find no such monitor in this land, save the sackless bodie, Dominie Miligan; he never took up wi' ane here could help him to aught but into a mischief."

"And yet," said the intrepid Davie, "his monitor, as ye ca't, is of this land, a kindly countryman of his own; no begot by a lord and nursed in an embroidered lap, but the son of poor and honest folk—even ane that showed genius in many things, though little skill in reading, writing, and arithmetic; have ye ever heard of Mr. David Gellock?"

"What the deil's Davie, as we aye ca'd him!" exclaimed the manufacturer, "yere surely dreaming, friend! that boy was as fu' of mischief as an egg's fu' o' meat: a dour, misheard neer-do-weel, dull in the class, and gude for naught but turning meal into muck."

"It cannot be the same Mr. David Gellock," said the true one, stoutly: "he who directs, through his friend Morison, the destinies of France, is gleg o' the ee, sharp of the uptauk; and they would need to rise before daylight, that sought to get ahint him."

"The Davie that I kenned," exclaimed Hugh, "was gleg of the ee, for he coveted mair nor his ain; he was sharp, too, of the uptauk, for he aye kenned when the aumrie-door wasna weel steeked; and as for nae ane getting ahint him, well I wot he ance got ahint me—a gaye gleg trick—and thrust cripple Crummie's crutch into my weaving machine, and spoiled mair gude yarn than the neck o' him was worth. I wish I had him by the neck now."

"Aweel," said Davie, in no gladsome mood, "the French have discovered what ye hadna the sense to see; the David whilk I spake of is no other than the deil's Davie, and as I'm gaun owre the water, I'se e'en tell him how weel he's remembered in his ain vale. Dod, the machinery of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company will smoke for it, I jalouse!"

"Weel, weel," replied the manufacturer, "we'se bide the brunt; he wad hae a small soul that would dread dirty Davie; but, skipper—"

"I'm nae skipper!" exclaimed the indignant Davie, "and there's my hand on't." So saying, he bestowed a slap with the palm of his hand on the cheek of the other, and walked off: the blow was given with such right good will, that Hugh spun thrice round, holding up both hands to his face, and cowering almost to the ground through excess of pain. When he looked up the pretended skipper had disappeared; Hugh soothed his pains under the Crowned Hammer, with an outward and inward application of brandy.

The next person encountered by David was a softer customer—the heiress of the Fourmerkland. She knew him at once, and thus accosted him: "What, Davie! and has the sea refused ye after having swallowed up the swine possessed with Satan? It's grown dainty o' the stomach of late; but there's nae doubt it was ordained ye were to die in the air and no in the water."

"Ay, woman, and is this you!" said Davie; "I thought ye wad hae been dead o' hunger, frae downright dread o' eating what ye could sell for a groat. I hae been abroad, woman, and hae learned ways o' saving such as never found the way into your noddle! an' I had time I wad learn ye how to render the wool that grows as coarse as rushes as soft as silk, and the ewe-milk cheese, which savours o' the bughts, as fragrant as Parmesan."

"It's weel kenned, Davie," replied the heiress, "that your tongue and truth were never sworn acquaintances; but never a word of Morison a' this time!"

"Morison," inquired Davie, "Morison! ye mair find a prouder name for him, lass, than Morison. He's chief of a division, and will be a king afore its lang; there'll be a grand getting up in the warld soon. I'll grow into something mysel."

The heiress paused, and said in a softer and more agreeable tone, "Weel, David, I am really glad to see you, and to hear that Morison has become a chief of a division, as ye calls it. Is't a division of a country, or what is't?"

"A country," cried Davie, "that's a gude thought, I'll tell Morison! But ye may ca't a division of a country if ye like, for it will lead to the division of kingdoms. A division is just ten thousand men wi' swords, and guns, and fixed bayonets, bent on conquering the world, and I'll be sworn they'll do't; we'll into Italy and herry the pope: oh! Mattie, woman, there will be sic heavy silver saunts, massive gold Madonnas, and sic bracelets of diamonds. I expect a wag-on load for my ain hand."

"And really, David, now," said the heiress, "is this a true matter, are ye no sklegging, think ye?"

"Deed," said the other, "it's scarcely possible to tell a lie about it, the whole looks sae romantic, as they ca't. I have been in a country where there's nae other fowk but men and women; nae kings nor earls; this was just the land for

us ; ye could as weel keep the sun frae shining as Morison frae distinguishing himself. I tell ye that even I am as great a man amaisht as Lord Roldan himself ; sae guess ye Morison's height frae mine." And Davie drew himself proudly up, gave his cloak a martial cast, and took three or four steps from the heiress and slowly returned.

"Weel, David, ye maun come up to the Fourmerkland and see us," said Mattie, "we're no chiefs of division, but we keep feal warm house and hae something baith in the pot and in the pan. I want to hear mair o' Morison's fortunes and yours ; ye ken there was ance a sough that he was to be laird of the Fourmerkland."

"Oh, ay," replied the veracious Davie, "there was sic a sough ance, but it will never be again, I jalouse."

"Wherefore no, Davie, lad, wherefore no, tell me that?"

"Because," said Davie, "ye pit owre little butter into yerè herd's brose, and owre little meal into the supper water : Morison's just liberality itself, and winna wed wi' a pinch the pan."

"All that can be mended, lad," replied the heiress, "a wilfu' waste makes a wofu' want ; twa littles make a mickle ; a pin i' the day's a groat in the year ; a wasting han' makes an empty pan ; we shall mend these matters, David, and find a cannie bield for you, too, lad."

"My certie, but yere a schemer !" exclaimed Davie ; "but Morison's no the lad to be caught wi' chaff. Laird of Fourmerkland ! Od, what wad you think were he to be king of Italy ; we hae naught to do but conquer it. Kings' crowns will be as plenty as nuts in the Newlands linn. I canna tell ye what he will do, for his mind's nearer the moon than mine : but he may have a lass wi' a county for a dowry when he likes : the dames of France, though a wee thought brown, fa' in love only wi' men o' talent. I hae been all but married ance or twice mysel."

"Who could have thought of this !" murmured the heiress to herself ; "I was rash in treating him sae roughly, and foolish in no receiving him to-night with kindness and respect. I think I haud a hank owre him yet though ; I maun lay mysel out for him ; I'm just the sort of wife that a man o' his frankness of hand requires, he wad gie awa the wealth of a parish. But, Davie, now," she said aloud, "is Morison as willing to be merry amang the lasses as he used to be ? does he tak them by the hand, and sit down beside them, and speak wi' sic a warm breath in their lug, that he spoils their haffet curls ? Ah, he was a joyous lad as ever was true to a tryste ; ane could scarce keep their feet wi' him, he said sic dazling things. I mind ae night—a simmer night—the moon was sitting on the hill-top, just wishing us gude e'en ; there was nae a breath of wind to be heard but our ain breathing ; the sound of the stream was music, but the music

of the burn was naught to the music o' his words—and then his grips! That was a night! I never gang by the spot, but I look at it and sigh—I hae nae sic daffin now! but there's nae Morisons 'cept ane!"

"Ye may weel say that," replied Davie; "the man that ye wad forsake thrift for, and that I wad shed my best blood for, can be nae common man! He might hae been laird of Howeboddum for a nod; he might hae been laird of Fourmerkland for a soft word or twa; and he might be the master of Roldan this blessed night, an' he liked; but he wad rather be a man, lass, and make his own name and fortune."

"Preserve us a'!" exclaimed the heiress; "master of Roldan! how could that be now! Mony stars maun drop frae the firmament ere that comes to pass."

"No sae mony as ye think, woman," said Davie; "all that he has to do, is to gang to Lord Roldan, and gaur him marry his mother, or rather own a marriage. Ay, and the lord wad be blithe to do't—he wad be glad to get sic a son a' at anes: but that can never be—that can never be, and its e'en the mair pity; for auld blood and gude blood's scarcer than it was in Scotland—I'm the last of my ain race."

"I tauld ye," said the heiress, "that it could never be; what, a lord marry a vassal's daughter! its daft to talk about it."

"Ye talk daftly about it onyhow," answered Davie; "it canna be because Morison is owre proud—owre haughty—far owre great already to stoop sae low, and lift sae little as the master-ship of Roldan—I tell ye, he'll have a quarter of the world to himself; and gosh! what plumed and jewelled madams will be at his feet; when he walks out, the train of beauty behind him will be as bright as that of the peacock, and just when he's in the height of his glory, I'll whisper in his lug, d'ye mind that simmer night aneath the tryeting thorn, wi' scrimk-the-cog of Fourmerkland!" The pride of the heiress got the better of her patience.

"Haud yere tongue, ye leasing loon!" she exclaimed; "wha taught ye to tak sic liberty wi' yere betters?"

"My betters," said Davie, "d'ye ca' the shilpit daughter of auld Pinchkyte of Fourmerkland my betters? Lord, woman, ye look up as if ye expekot Morison to kipple till ye; bless yere five wits, I wadna even demean mysel' to sic a match:

'I think to climb a far higher tree,
And herry a far richer nest;
Tak this advice, dainty maiden, frae me,
Humility sets thee best.'

Having uttered this bit of verse, the only time, as Davie afterward acknowledged, that he had ever found verse useful, he strode away and left the heiress to pursue her soli-

tary way to the Fourmerkland, and reflect on what she had heard. "It is nae easy matter," thus she mused, "for a young woman to decide on the merits of lovers; here's Morison, if I had guided him wisely and kindly, I might hae come in for the half of all this good luck; but wha could hae divined that fortune would have taken all this trouble to burden him with honours? And Davie Gellock—misleard Davie, as we aye ca'd him, he has high hopes too: bless me, wha wad hae jaloused that the ragged lout, wha used to rejoice when I threw a cheese-paring to him, wad grow sic a height as to despise the heiress of Fourmerkland. A thrifty and thinking body, I see, may make great mistakes; if I had the warld to begin again—but its of nae use to re-pine."

As Davie hastened to the Elfin-glen, he could not help laughing at his conversation with the heiress. "Her!" he exclaimed, "it set her weel to slight sic a lad as Morison; a creature sae mean, that she grudged the very cheese with which she baited the mouse-traps. I trow I bamboozled her, I sorted the selfish cutty; she'll be fit to hang hersel' now, only it would take twa baubee's-worth o' cord to do't, and her soul's no large enough for sic an expenditure." He was joyously indulging in these speculations, when on turning suddenly into the private path which led to the Elfin cottage, he found himself confronted by Nanse and Lord Roldan.

Davie started as if a couple of spectres had risen in his path; the one he believed to be the rankest witch that ever afflicted cattle with nameless ills, or capered o'er the Gallo-way mountains on a palfrey of rag-wort; of the other he had lived in dread from a boy, and though he had seen much that tended to loose the hold of old affections and old fears, he felt the united force of all now, and intimated as much by bringing himself suddenly up in his course, and standing stock-still, with something like a desire to veer round and retreat. "Stay, sir," said Lord Roldan, who knew him at once, "stay, and tell me, what wind has blown you back upon this coast?"

At this question Davie's spirit rose—his natural audacity returned. "A kindlier wind, my lord, than the ane that blew me away, a wind whilk I have reason to believe was raised by yourself and Nanse there: let her deny it if she can. I heard Dick Corsbane as gude as admit it; but if the deevil raised the wind, it was God that guided it"—and he wagged his right arm stoutly, and pressed to go on.

"Weel said, Davie!" exclaimed Nanse, "nor did ye speak unwisely about the wind, my lad, that carried ye away; the captain bargained for a snoring breeze and a sea three feet deep in foam, but I gave him a wind as gentle as the breath of a baby; ay! and took care that nae harm should befall you. It wasna likely that the captain wad work ye an ill

turn, whan he kenned that ane as black again wad be wrought to him for it."

"Deil ma care!" said Davie, "but that didna hinder the captain frae finding a fiery grave in his ain haddin in Hispaniola: I saw the fire spouting from door and window, o'er roof and rafter."

"Dinna be owre sure that the captain's dead," said Nanse; "I saw something unco like him no an hour syne!"

"It wad be his spirit, it's like," said Davie, with a shudder. "I did him nae ill, sae he needna come after me!"

"Weel, Davie," replied Nanse, "it might be his spirit; but the captain had queer ways o' his ain, and maybe gae his foes a sample of his skill, and before he blew the house to the lift, dived into the ground like a mole."

"Na, but the like o' that, now!" said Davie. "Oh, Nanse, woman, wad ye but come owre to France, ye wad make yere fortune wi' telling of foul weather before it comes, and the success of battles yet to be fought. But I'm owre lang here," and away he hurried.

When Lord Roldan reached the castle, he was told that a stranger was waiting for him. "A stranger!" said he, peevishly, "a white man or a black?"

"Ou, nouthur, but atween the twa; mair black than white, and mair grim than black: he says naught but damme! and seems of the sea, for he's as restless as ane of its waves."

"It is my man—it is Daring Dick, as he calls himself," muttered his lordship. "Nanse was right. Now for the marriage lires—but dare I trust him so far? He must obtain them by stratagem and wile; she saved them from the fire, and now they are to save my name from becoming a blank in the land!"

CHAPTER VII.

Thy spirit, Independence, let me share.

Lord of the lion-heart and eagle-eye:

Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,

Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.

SMOLLETT.

ONE of our most impassioned poets asserts, that the divinest rapture Heaven spares to earth, is that which warms the bosoms of two youthful lovers, when they meet on a summer eve beneath the milk-white thorn. The love between mother and son is not less rapturous and equally divine. "Oh, my son, my son!" exclaimed Mary, clasping Morison in a closer embrace, "I would do aught for thee, but

throw away my own soul. If I have refused to be placed among the dames of the land, was it not because I remembered the shame put upon thee, and felt proud that thou hadst wrought out a high fortune for thyself? And oh! should I not be happy when the child that I sinned for, and toiled for, and prayed evening and morning for, is restored to my arms again, in brightness and in glory."

"Mother," said Morison, returning her caress, "wherever I moved, and whatever I did, you were present: a thousand and a thousand times have I recalled your tenderness, and a thousand times lived over again the blessed hours which we have spent solitary together, in this little chamber; and, oh! many a time have I recalled your affectionate predictions of the eminence I should reach—but little did ye dream it was to be by the sword."

"Deed that's true, my bairn," said Mary, "but the will of God maun be obeyed. The violence which reft thee from thy native land, in a great measure shaped thy calling and turned thee to this course of blood—but ye will bide with me now, my bairn; there are many ways to fame in thy ain land, for oh, I like ill that ye are a blood-spiller, and warse, that ye are striving heart and hand wi' thae wearyfou French."

"Wi' the French, gude guide us!" exclaimed Jeanie Rabson, "is that true, Morison, and whether are ye fighting for us or against us."

Morison now sat down, and giving one hand to his mother and the other to Jeanie, smiled and said, "Surely I am not fighting against my dear, my native land, in siding with France against the banded despots of Germany? We draw the sword to restore the rights of which kings and nobles have deprived their brethren; when that is accomplished we will sheathe it, and rest us amid a redeemed and regenerated world. But, mother, my stay here must be short—neither is it safe." He laid his cloak aside as he spoke, and three medals set in diamonds attached to his dress glimmered to the lamp.

"What's the meaning and witter of these now?" inquired Jeanie Rabson.

"The first," answered Morison, "intimates that I saved a general's life; the second, that I helped to gain a great battle; and the third, that I aided in suppressing faction and restoring unity to France."

"Saved a general's life—won a battle—and restored France! Oh, my bairn, ye have been permitted to run a blessed course," said Mary; "but what is this now, Morison?"

"These are the new colours of liberty; together they intimate unity, and separately have a high meaning: the white is the purity of our cause; the blue, the unstainable honour of man; and the red denotes that we will spill our best

blood in the purchase of freedom. These blended colours will shine over the earth; they will gleam as a rainbow in all nations, and be hailed as a sign that freedom is not extinguished, but about to be awakened like the blaze of a comet."

"I wish that we had Dominie Milligan here," said Jeanie, "he wad profit by these words, for they clean surpass my comprehension."

Mary held Morison at arms' length, and said, "I rejoice that ye have come through extreme peril unwounded, for lead and steel have spared ye. Oh, mickle I prayed that ye might escape scathless through all dangers that environed thee; though, doubtless, had I kenned the nature of thy danger I wad have been mair particular; and again, I rejoice to behold thee laden as it were with honours earned by noble deeds. Oh! the sight of thee is pleasant to my eyes—a solace I should have said, for I canna say that my sight is sae gude as when I used to gather nuts for thee in the Elfin-linn, Morison, as ye sat on the flower-bank and held up your little daidlie to receive them."

"But, Morison, lad," said Jeanie Rabson, "ye mauna think of gaun to the wars again, ye have done enough; let all others do as mickle, and the thing, whatever it is, will be won. We canna want ye, and we winna want ye, sae just make up yere mind to abide. Besides, ye see, if ye should alter yere mind, ye may be Lord of Roldan, and that wad be a blythe sight to me: for I canna just say that I comprehend what ye mean, when ye propose to earn higher honours in another land. Bless the lad's wits! to be Lord of Roldan is to inherit the glory of a thousand years—thae three stripes of riband are but the rags of yesterday, and nae better in my een than a cockade at the lug of some poor lad, that has listened to the blarney of Pat Macanalley, the recruiting sergeant o' the forty-sixth regiment."

What the answer of Morison would have been Jeanie had not an opportunity of knowing, for the voice of Davie Gellock was heard all at once at the door in rough contention with two district authorities, who asserted that a French spy had landed that night from a smuggling cutter, and was now in the house, out of which they were resolved to drag him, and examine, and imprison, and, if the law allowed, hang him.

"But I tell ye baith," said Davie in a determined tone of voice, "that, in the first place, there is no Frenchman here; in the second place, there is no spy here; and in the third place, that ye maun e'en take my word for the same, because Mary's a lone woman and on no account will I allow her to be disturbed."

"And wha' the deil are ye, sir," said one of the strangers,

"that we maun swallow a' that ye say like sweet milk—wha are ye, I say!—answer that!"

"Wha am I, say ye?" responded Davie; "I am a commissioned officer—I am here on a private and peculiar duty—and I admonish ye to take care of what ye do."

"A commissioned officer?" queried the other. "Were the moon a little clearer I should like to look at this commission of yours."

"Oh! it can be read by ordinary light," said Davie, snatching a pistol from his pocket, and cocking it at the same moment. "There is my commission, steel mounted, inlaid with gold, locked and loaded; I have another at your service." As he said this he placed himself full in the middle of the way, and seemed resolved to use his weapon on all and sundry who ventured to gainsay him.

"It's that meddling bodie Bailie Bodkin, he maun keek in the tail of a' things," whispered Jeanie Rabson; "but he'll be aff, for he hasna a heart bigger than a billister. I wonder he thought o' coming here, when he jaloused there was a man in the house."

Back started the bailie in dismay, when Davie snatched out the pistol, and he took another step backward when he heard the click of the cocking, and saw the muzzle brought nigh the level. He, however, put a fair face on his fears. "Weel, weel, sir, enough done—enough done—I believe you to be a commissionate officer: and I believe there is nobody in this house on whom, as a magistrate, I can lawfully seize; I hae been wrang informed I jalouse; but, young gentleman, let me give ye the advice which, as a magistrate, I have a right to do: dinna be sae dooms ready wi' yere weapons, no that I care a crack o' my thumb about it; but they might gae off wi' wrang handling, and do muckle mischief."

"Why, sir," said Davie, "you ought to know that with a soldier these bits of hollow iron are familiar things; a tailor to his goose, a sutor to his last, and a soldier to his weapon; eh, bailie?"

"Ha! then you know me, sir?" exclaimed the other with some surprise.

"I do," answered Davie, with undaunted assurance; "I do, sir, and the king whom I serve, sir, knows how much the peace of this district owes to Bailie Bodkin. A word in your ear," and he led the other a little aside: "there is a man in this land known by the name of Hugh Heddles; under pretence of manufacturing he deals in smuggled chintz and lace! be as a watch upon him, bailie—you understand me."

"Deed do I, sir," said the bailie, "and have long suspected this: I will circumvent him; I wondered aye what made the regular trade in these commodities fall off. And now let me

say a word in return: there is a person in this land, one Burns, sir, a rhymmer; some men call him poet; he says such things, and he sings such things about freedom, and lords, and kings, and governments, that it makes a body's hair stand on end to hear him: had I not better lay a claw upon him!"

"By no means, sir," said Davie in a confidential tone; "he is poor, he has the affliction of rhyme upon him—a double malady. No, bailie, let him sing his heart out, let him be frozen on the bough from which he pours his melody like a bird in winter: would ye make the man comfortable by putting him in prison? would you give him a warm meal and a pleasant house? bailie, I thought I knew you better."

"I see, I see," said the other, "and so good-night."

With a swelling look, and a gait akin to that of the turkey cock, when with his tail up, and his breast puffed out, he domineers over all the tenants of the barnyard, did Davie part from the bailie and enter the cottage; he however took in a reef, when he beheld one whom all save himself called his master, and advanced with a meeker look, and soberer step.

"David!" exclaimed Morison, "what wind has blown you here? I left you to follow, and here you are as soon almost as myself."

"Oh, man!" said Davie, "mickle fa's out in sma' compass: ae event, as they ca't, just scratched the back of anither; whiles it seemed for us, and whiles against us, but if ye had held the hank in yere ain hand, ye couldna hae guided the steeds of fortune's chariot better. These are no my words, but the words o' ane that has a warm side to ye, Morison."

"Bless me, can this be David Gelloch?" exclaimed Mary—"eh, sirs! how a year or twa in a foreign climate mends youthfu' looks; ye wad say that the air of France is favourable to Scotch faces, since it has made our auld misleard friend Davie into a gentleman."

"I can scarce trust my ain een," said Jeanie Rabson; "it seems but yesterday that he was rinning bare-headed among the hills, like an Isle of Mull cowie, when I used to dread he wad scare the lambs. Ah, my lad! mony a good bason o' cream and lapfou of flour-scone ye hae got at Howeboddom—but ye'll have forgot a' that now?"

"Atweel have I no, Miss Jean," answered Davie; "I am come of a race that never forgot a gude turn, nor forgae an ill ane; and I have e'en been thinking, if through my ain valour, and that of Morison here, I should rise to be a chief of division, as they ca't, I wad e'en, when the war was o'er, whig my way hameward, and if ye hadna relented and married the dominie, to e'en wed ye mysel and sit quietly down in Howeboddom for the rest of my life."

"The lad's demented," said Jeanie, with something of a

smile and frown. "I'm old enough to be your mither, ye gome-eral."

"That wad just answer me," said Davie, "for I stand in need sometimes of a mouthful of gude counsel; I canna aye expect to hae Morison at my elbow. Ye dina say na, then?"

During this conversation, Morison had been perusing a letter which Davie had dropped into his hand; it was from Napoleon, and intimated that the writer had now the command of the army of Italy—was about to commence the campaign, and wished to have him at his side, when he struck the blow by which he hoped to lay the ancient monarchies of Europe prostrate. "Come," thus the letter concluded, "and let us gaze together from the Alps on the loveliness of Italy, and then stoop down, and chasing the tyrants from the classic soil, establish a republic as warlike and as lasting as that of Rome. Son of Fingal, come to thy friend Napoleon!"

Morison read the letter again and again. "I cannot reach the full meaning!" he exclaimed. "Napoleon hints at the union of old and new friends, and bids me regard it as a step taken by fate in my favour."

"Ou," answered, Davie, "I wonder that ye havena heard how he has married our auld 'weel-faured' friend, Madame Beauharnois; what could have happened better for us baith I wonder?"

"These are indeed great news," said Morison; "well, I must take a view of beautiful Italy, and aid in raising this republican superstructure. It will be enough to awaken the dead, when the banner of freedom is once more unfurled on its own soil. Liberty and equality! these are sounds dearer to me than the shouts of Scotland! Scotland! when some Douglas displayed the thistle on the other side of the border."

"Cease talk," said Mary, "and partake of some of His mercies. Oh, my bairn, ask but a blessing to your meal were it ever sae brief, and dinna fa' to like a hungered wolf. There, now—glad am I that ye havena forgotten the lessons whilk that godly man, Dominie Milligan, gave ye; eat and dinna spare: and, David, when did ye want a second bidding?"

"Never before," answered Davie; "and I can tell ye, dame, that I hae dined when we had balls whistling through the air for music, and supped, when our grace was the groans of the wounded and the dying. Od, Morison, an we gang to Italy, we shall hae rare fun! first, there will be as mickle fighting as wad hae pacified the stomach of Wallace wight; secondly, there will be pickings on the field of victory, and unco rivings during the 'sault o' towns and cities; thirdly—for it's a superstitious land—there will sic things be had, as holy manglers of silver, and cradles of beaten gold, and saunts made o' baith, and petticoats for the Virgin that can stan' their lane wi' diamonds. Od, heirsch, I'll send you

ane of them hame to make a mantle o'; it will lighten a' the kirk, and on a winter night the lasses may spin on the wee wheel beside it, and need na candle."

"Hout, hout," said the heiress, "the lad's gaun daft."

Morison ate little; he seemed lost in thought. "It will astonish the world," he exclaimed: "out of the rottenness and feculence of monarchy, a pure republic will arise, in which all the genius which nature bestows on its sons will come into action and find full employment. There will be no hereditary princes to oppress us with their folly—no hereditary peers to monopolize all the honours which the nation can bestow—all will be equal—all alike—save in those qualities born with us. It is a magnificent thought, and Napoleon is the man to carry it into execution."

To this Davie replied, with a short dry cough which intimated doubt and dissent. "When I eat an apple," said he, "I aye find an indigestible core; in the ripest plum there's a stane; in the sweetest beef there's a bane; and even in a kiss, a sort of wershness o' mouth comes after it that's aught but pleasant. I jalouse, Morison, ye'll find something of the sort in this grand structure of yours. A snow castle's a grand thing, sae is the rainbow, but they winna stand tear and wear. I mind ance daft John Tamson came to Sandie Kirkpatrick, the smith, and laying on his hearth chips of china, bits of crystal, brass buttons, the stroupe o' a teapot, the blade of a razor, and a lassie's buckling-wam, 'Sandie,' quo he, 'make me a hand-vice out of them.' Sandie was nae sae daft as try to make a sound loom out o' sic unsafe materials; yet ye maun try to make a pure republic out of the tipplers, and gamblers, and spendthrifts, and cut-throats, and fules, and knaves of the warld at large—it winna do."

Morison could not help smiling at this description. "Davie," he answered, "we are obliged to make this experiment in self-defence; knowledge tells us of our right, and education shows us our fallen condition; if we do no more but reduce rank to an equality with the humble, we will do a good deed for human nature; it will enable us all to start fair in the great race of fame."

"Ay," said Davie, "but there, ye see, we differ; I hae nae wish to lose my breath in the great race of fame; in fact, I carena a brass boddle for the thing they ca' fame, for which sae many toil and sweat, and sell themselves to Satan. I wadna gie a supper o' buttered sowens for a hale eternity of fame—mickle the man kens about it wha lies in the kirk-yard."

"Davie, lad," exclaimed Jeanie, "ye speak weel; I hae aye thought the thing ca'd fame was unco unsubstantial. If a body could be sure o' hearing praise when they're dead and gane, it might be worth while to deserve it; but gude gracious me! only to think that a man hopes to hear his sangs sung,

or his actions talked of and commended when he has been decently clapped on the noddle wi' the bedral's shovel. Na! na! a supper of sowens is weel worth, as ye say, the fame of a song ony time."

"Fair fa' ye, heiress, for that," answered Davie: "I shall bear ye in mind when I get Italy under my thumb; I'll send a silver Saunt Andrew hame to auld Nanse Halberson; she'll no like it the worse for the metal—and I'll send all the twelve apostles in burning gowd to you, heiress—only ye mauna consult the dominie on their merits—I'll be jealous. But what light is that coming this way?"

"It is a light," answered Mary, "which has long been as a 'star in the east' to me: it is our own Rose Roldan—the Lady Rose, whom my bairn's courage saved from a watery grave. Never a day passes that she comes nae here, be it sunny or stormy, to talk about that sad night: and ye wad think she takes pleasure in remembering how the waves tumbled, and the wind blew, and the ship reeled, till all the world was shut from her eyes; and how, when she awakened, she found herself in the arms of ane whose blood, at any rate, made it his duty to save her."

"It's a pity," said Jeanie Rabson, in a whisper, as the feet of Rose were heard on the threshold, "it's a pity that there should be a doubt on her parentage. She is called the daughter of Lord Roldan, but I have my suspicions of that."

Morison's blood rushed to his face, as the young lady, accompanied by one of her waiting maidens, entered the apartment.

We have already intimated that a beauty of its own belonged to the line of Roldan, namely, beauty of form; to this Rose added extreme loveliness, and that bright expression of face which veils other charms—in truth, the soul which looked out of her eyes, and the heart which warmed her tongue, drew all attention from her long round white fingers; from feet which moved as gracefully under her kirtle as twin birds under the wing of the mother hen—and a shape, from which, were the original marble lost, the statue of Venus might be restored to the world.

"Bless thee, my child!" said Mary, when the young lady entered, "what can have moved thee to leave the castle at this hour? But I can guess—you have heard, doubtless, of his coming."

"Oh, mother!" said Rose—her eye had not yet fallen on Morison, who stood in some degree concealed, "he did not tell me, but I knew of his visit. But, oh! the gladness of heart which I expected from it is turned to sorrow, for he is returned with looks in which anger and despair are sternly written. Have you refused? Oh! say that you have not, and that I am to call you mother."

"Oh, my dear young lady," answered Mary, "I thought not of him, but of a dearer one."

"What! what of Morison!" exclaimed Rose: "every wind which blows from France, comes with tidings on its wings of his fame and deeds."

"There he is, lady—there he is. Oh, that thou couldst but persuade him to abide with us, and return no more to that terrible France, that eats up the children of other nations as well as her own."

When Rose saw Morison her colour changed, her knees trembled; she could scarcely stand, neither could she speak, but she murmured gladness. He received, rather than took her into his arms, saying, "Lady!—sister I dare not call you—one of the brightest moments of a life of sorrow was that in which I found you like a lily on the waters. When I wish to be more than usually cheerful, I recall the time when, in my arms, beautiful as thou art now, I bore thee out of the tide."

"Call me not lady—call me sister; call me anything that sounds kindly," said the Lady Rose. "I, at least, am not under the influence of that ancestral pride which marks our house: I am your sister, Morison, and thus I welcome the return of my gallant brother." With her white arms thrown around his neck, and her face glowing on his shoulder, she stood for a moment's space.

"Did you ever see onything sae beautiful in the wide world?" said Davie, in an under tone to Jeanie Rabson: "I have seen thousands of people in Paris glowing, for hours together, at a lad and lass in marble; but what was that to this? She's a perfect beauty! The dames of France thought Morison and me handsome—and we're well enough; but—"

"Our house!" said Morison, leading the young lady to a chair, "I have no house. Alas! madam, why will you persist in reminding me that I am without a father? But be it so. The thoughts of what has been denied me shall nerve me and sustain me, and kindle me up to those deeds of daring which the times demand, and the trampled-on freedom of human nature requires."

"This is just the way, Lady Rose," said Jeanie, "that he has spoken to his mother and myself since ever he reached hame. I canna for the heart o' me comprehend what he means. What foot is sae rude as to trample on man or woman, as if a nation lay like an armfu' o' sarks and petticoats in a washing tub, and tyranny lap in to tramp them, boots, and spurs, and a'!"

Neither Rose nor Morison could help smiling at this rustic image. "Indeed, Jeanie," said the former, "you take a very sensible view of the matter; but it is not of deeds needful for other nations that I am come to speak; it is of a nearer and dearer matter. I am come to call Morison brother, and

his mother Lady Raldon. I know Lord Roldan's heart is in this: and, oh! let not pride, as strong and unnatural as his own has been, interfere."

Neither Morison nor his mother answered a word; their looks seemed troubled. Jeanie Rabson looked on the fair suppliant, and said, "Dear Lady Rose, know ye not that half the valley say that ye are not the daughter of Lord Roldan, but of his brother; and that as such, putting our bairn Morison out of the question, the lordship is your own! We a' ken that ye were once called the child of Lord Thomas, and it may just be that his brother, for reasons kent to himsel', calls ye his own daughter; if ye are his daughter, and he speed in his present wooing, what will become of yere rights to the land, my bonnie lady?"

"I am the daughter of Lord Roldan," said Rose, with some displeasure on her brow; "he has claimed me as his own, and hinted that I was adopted by his brother out of compassion, as my mother had suffered much wrong. Alas! I cannot now silence the public tongue by producing evidence of my birth; the lady whom I first called mother carried a breaking heart abroad, and wandered beyond the reach of compassion or the inquiry of friends."

"Deed, my bonnie lady," replied the heiress, "ye maun forgie me if I express my disbelief in the legend which Lord Roldan tells ye—but I have na doubt that Providence, wha rights a' wrangs in the lang run, will prove to ye that ye are Morison's cousin, and no his sister; but if sae, oh, bairns! why should ye not love one another just as much?"

The words of Madame Desmoulins at the table of the Lady Beauharnois now flashed on Morison's mind. "Lady," he said, "I have no interest in this question of descent; the house of Roldan is the same to me as all other houses; but it chanced that my name and looks recalled your lineage to a French lady of rank, and she spoke of Thomas, Lord Roldan, and his lady and child, as of persons with whom she had been well acquainted: this shall be more closely inquired into."

These words went to the heart of Lady Rose; she became of a sudden thoughtful; her memory ran rapidly back over the lapse of a dozen years; she recalled much of what she had seen and heard, and the result was, that her confidence in her descent was not a little shaken. She said nothing, but looked on Morison and looked on his mother; her colour went and came, and she seemed faint almost to falling. He would have supported her in his arms, but she motioned him off, and making an effort, said, "I will cherish no such thoughts, I am his daughter, why should I doubt his word?"

"Rose! Rose!" said Mary, "ye lean on a broken reed; I trusted his word, and the upshot was sin, and sorrow, and

misery; but I wish not to hurt the feelings of a daughter of the man that wronged me—vengeance is not mine.”

“I have heard enough,” said Rose, “to convince me that the hopes which I once cherished, of calling you Lady Roldan, are but idle dreams; the pride of the high is not sterner than the pride of the humble, and why should it be otherwise? are we not all God’s creatures? yet I wish in this matter it were not so.” She paused, and seemed desirous of saying more: whatever she wished to say was, however, unsaid; she turned to be gone, but found Morison at her side.

The wind was laid; the stars were bright; there was a sweetness in the air; and the sound of the rivulet in the linn was like the melody of birds. As they strayed along, for the steps they took were so short and slow that they sauntered rather than walked, Morison thus spoke.

“Lady, with to-morrow’s sun I must be again on the waters; but wherever I go, and whatever may be my fortune, I shall think of my sister Rose, as of a dream of paradise—a vision of Heaven; do you believe in visions?”

Rose turned half round, looked in his face with something of a smile, and repeated his words, “Do I believe in visions? No! unless you look on me as one—but can a vision do this?” And escaping from his side, she bounded over a brook which lay along their path, the same on whose bank the Ladye Chapel stood. The ruins were at hand, and their way lay past—nay, through them.

“Oh, my lady,” thus interposed her waiting woman, “dinna venture by such an unsensie place at this untimous time o’ night; the chapel is haunted ye ken—a vision a’ in white is a fearful thing, and moreover naeboddy lucks that looks on’t. Besides, Lord Roldan disna like the visits which ye pay to the chapel; the very shepherds point out the Lady Rose’s seat, and keep weeds frae growing about it, and idle bairns frae sitting on’t—I aye myself wonder what makes ye like it; for the bit’s unco boggily and far frae bonnie. I wadna gie a half hour on the shellin hill when the miller’s son’s in the mill, for a year of the Ladye Chapel wi’ a’ its garlands of wall flowers.”

Morison glanced at Rose as her attendant spoke, and said, “It must have been your shadow, then, which passed itself on me for a vision on that dread night before I was carried away from Scotland—but vision, or shadow, or substance, the words spoken have been as prophecy to direct and animate me.”

“Now,” replied Rose, “you are getting into the regions of romance; I, as my maiden truly says, have been here at all times and in all seasons—in winter, when snow is in the air and the storm sings mournfully among the ruins—and in summer, when the breath of flowers gives odour to the dew,

and all is so sweet and serene and silent, that ye might hear your heart beat—and yet no vision has ever appeared to me. What did you see, Morison?"

"I not only saw," replied Morison, "but I heard, and I did not hear alone, but I felt." Here he paused, and looked into the eyes of Rose with a sharpness which told that he believed she knew more about the vision which appeared to him in the Ladye Chapel, than she seemed disposed to acknowledge.

"Let us pursue this matter no further," said Rose; "we must not talk of spirits in the places which they haunt; rather tell me now, since we have reached the scene where we must part, what are your views in the world: I know all that has hitherto happened to you; think you that Rose Roldan feels not for her brave and unhappy brother? my arm was about him when he felt it not."

"Indeed!" answered Morison, "but why need I express surprise? I have known your worth long. You alone, lady, hindered me from resenting fiercely the offers of the lord of this land on which I now, but shall not long, tread; offers which, coming at the eleventh hour, are on his own part selfish, and to us insulting."

"Morison! Morison! a mind such as yours should be noble and forgiving; do you not feel for the ruin which seems to impend over the house of our fathers? Will you allow the banner to be plucked from its turrets? the fire to be extinguished on its hearth? the nettle and the long grass to grow up and choke the marble monuments of your race? For shame! one word from you to your mother might prevent all this: a great crime would be atoned for in the eyes of the world, as I know it is privately by tears and repentance; and let me say it, one would then inherit the lands of Roldan capable of reviving the fame of his ancestors. Say but that word," and she clasped her arms around his neck, and half hanging by them, gazed up in the face which she pulled towards her. But her looks, more eloquent and moving than her words, were all in vain.

"Lady," said Morison, raising her up as he spoke, "you ask what I cannot give! my resolution has been told to the hills, to the streams, and to the deep sea; it is recorded in heaven; it is written in hell! Nay, more, I have sworn, and I have leagued myself with those who have the power to do it, to pull down the titled of the earth, restore the order of nature, and fulfil the intentions of Providence. A great change is about to come on man, and wo to those who stand in its way! France has begun the work of regeneration, and her armies are about to go forth east, west, north, and south, with the sword in one hand for tyrants, and holding out the other to welcome, in a brotherly grasp, all who have the souls to be free and equal."

"And are these your dreams?" exclaimed Rose; "then God in his mercy pity you, for they are not only vain, but sinful, and cannot be even attempted to be realized, without deluging the world with blood. And so you are one of the apostles of that wild creed which France has proclaimed to the world, of liberty and equality? I expected something better from your noble nature and your excellent sense: when I augured your rise in the world, it was in the spirit of your nature, not in the spirit of your love of vengeance. The wrongs you have endured are blinding your judgment; but go on, a few years, perhaps months, will move the cloud from your eyes, and show you that the vale of flowers, amid the odours of which you imagine yourself walking, is a vale of blood ankle deep; while the goddess of liberty, whom you worship, is a female fiend, whose breath is destruction, and whose paths lead to the pit." She had withdrawn her arms from his neck as she uttered this, and was standing on one of the carved figures which inlaid the floor: she vanished from her place as she ceased speaking, and Morison, much moved, turned his face to the Elfin-glen, pondering on what she had said, but not at all shaken in his resolutions.

CHAPTER VIII.

I tell you he does sit in gold, his eye,
Red as 'twould burn Rome, and his injury
The jailer to his pity.

SHAKESPEARE.

As Morison stepped out of the Ladye Chapel, he was met by Davie Getlock: the arms of that worthy were crossed over his bosom, his step was measured, and his looks seemed charged with some intelligence, which he was resolved, however, to communicate in his own way.

"David," said Morison, "we must be gone; our ship is in the bay, and time presses as well as passes. I long to look down from the rugged Alps upon polished Italy."

"I dare say it's a grand sight," said Davie; "but I shall make a look frae Criffel tap serve my turn, I'm thinking. No that I regard either fire or steel, for when my blood's up, and it's no ill to raise, I carena whether the enemy be horse or foot."

Morison, experienced in the contradictory moods of his follower, was silent. Davie followed the matter up, and spoke in plainer language. "It's lang till day, and ye canna stir till it's the pleasure o' the tide; ye have time, therefore,

to listen to me, but ye're wrapped up as if ye had seen a ghast, instead of parleying wi' a piece of sonsie flesh and blood, like the Lady Rose—will ye listen to me, yea or nay?"

"And what wad Roger say, an' he could speak?" was the reply of Morison.

"That's aye yere way," answered Davie, "but ye mauna think to put me off wi' a screed of verse. I'm thinking of changing my condition—o' taking unto myself a wife—d'ye understand me now?"

"Indeed do I, Davie; and who is to be the happy dame? Is she of Scottish blood?"

"Ay, Scottish blood, and auld blood, and gude blood, too," said the other; "what have you to say now to bonnie Mattie Anderson?"

"What, the heiress of Fourmerkland? Davie, ye're a bauld chield; she is a gleg one; every finger she has is like a brier, and as sharp as needles and preens. I'm afraid she'll scrimp ye o' yere cogie, and ye dinna like to be scrimpit of that, ye ken."

"Deed now, ye talk in that vinegar way, because she wadna bide a brush of wooing frae you lang syne; but I have no wish to marry her—I'm a lad of a sedater turn—I've made my market in anither airt; can ye no guess now? try."

Morison perceived that Davie had some project in his head; he therefore resolved to allow him to make the disclosure in his own way; and to tell the truth, he was unable to divine what he was driving at. "Well, David, let me see," said Morison; "ye are indeed a lad of a sedate mind, and light looks and gay behaviour are not according to your nature. There's Kate Davison, a discreet woman, not troubled now with the levities of youth; has had her mind purified with three misfortunes; she will make a capital wife."

"That's taunt the first," answered Davie.

"Kate is not the woman, then," said Morison; "surely it cannot be Nanse Halberson? and yet, let me tell you, a witch-wife who can reap riggs she never pleughed, milk cows that never owned her for mistress, and put wine in her aumry by the wind of her mouth, is not a spouse to be mocked at."

Davie burst into a fit of laughter, and exclaimed, "Weel now, the like of you, for downright deevilry o' speech, is no to be found atween Tinwald and Tongeland. Muckle will be the fun that I'll lose by leaving ye; and yet leave ye I maun: I thought something was gaun to happen, my nose bushed out an' bled, as I came within sight of the Muir o' Gallowa."

A few steps had only been taken when Davie resumed the conversation: "I'm saying, Morison, how did love come on you at first? Did it come like a sweet smell, when the south wind sweeps owre a bed o' roses and through lanes o' honeysuckle, or did ye just gape and swallow it like sweet milk? It's a fearfu' thing—but see! here she comes, her

very sel'; she marvels what can be come owre me, and is come to seek me, nae doubt—bless her face! it was ance a bonnie ane, and nearly as good as maist faces yet."

"Why this is Jeanie Rabson, ye gowk! vanity has blinded ye," said Morison.

"I'm name sae blind as ye wad think; and if it be Jeanie Rabson, is it sic a marvel that ane wi' a clear head and as clear een should see desert in me? I may bless the hour I was carried west awa: had I bidden at hame, she wad never have found out my merits. Gude-eeen to ye, again, heiress; ye're come to seek them that's gaye willing to be found; tak my arm for faut o' a better—I think my shadow looks na ill."

"Why, Davie, ye're daft," said the heiress, sharply; "what d'ye see about me that ye should cast yere head so high, and cut such fantastic capers, and glower and giggle aae in my face! I protest yere breath's like the reek o' a bouking of blankets—fleg! the fallow's filthy as well as foolish."

"Heh, woman!" exclaimed Davie, "but we're grown desperate saucy all at anes; we look owre our nose as if we saw something no warldlike. We're sair altered within this hour; we dealt in sweeter and safer words no very lang syne; wha was't that looked sae kirk and sae cantie when I spake o' settling down in Howeboddum, the gude man o' the same, and Jeanie Rabson the gude wife? Lord, woman! dinna begin wi' thae airs till ance we're married, and then indulge in them as ye like."

"Ance we're married!" exclaimed the heiress, in vast surprise; her lips parted with wonder and her eyes opened wider than when, as she afterward said, a hundred ewe lambs were worried in ae night by the fox before speaning time. "Ye strolling gomerai, what has put it into that tawty noddle, that Jean Rabson of Howeboddum wad draw up wi' ane that has a drap of gipsy blood in his body—even yersel' to me!—it sets ye weel!"

"Oh, heiress," said Davie, with something of a beseeching tone, "we're a' God's creatures; and I can tell ye, lass, that I am no accustomed to be taunted. My certie! the ladies of France thought otherwise; I was called the handsome Scot. Mae than ane o' them licked their lips at me, but I aye said, na, na, my heart is in Scotland. But, heiress, ye are yere liefu' lane, and I maun gae hame wi' you. I se warrant ye'll hear reason ayont the knowe."

"Ye're a fule, and that's a faut," replied the heiress. "Farewell, Morison—my ain Morison! I daurna trust my heart when I speak to you, for oh, man! ye hae scorned a bonnie fortune and a braw title; and I fear broken a heart that ye should hae soothed and counselled. Alas! pride's come on your side of the hedge now. May God keep his hands about ye, Morison, for ye hae mickle need on't!"

This unexpected sally affected Morison and exasperated Davie.

"Ay, ye may rin!" exclaimed the latter, looking after the heiress as she hastened homeward, "ye may rin; ye shall hing like a slae in winter, till frozen on the stalk, before Davie puts out a hand to pou ye. Whaever heard sic pride!—a hirsel-hirding hizzie, weel stricken in years: forty-twa by the register o' baptisms; lucken-browed; reel-e'd, else I'm gleyed mysel; as spreckled on the chafts as the wame o' a laverock; has a kind o' trail wi' the tae fit, if no a limp wi' the tither. Od, I'm weel rid o' her; what an escape! Poor bird Davie was nearly grippit wi' chaff; she's scarcely cannie, for naught but a cantrip could hae pou'd my senses sae aside. I may tak myself by the hand and shake it in congratulation."

These words were uttered for Morison to hear, but he heard them not; he was musing deeply on the events of the night, and weighing his offered fortune in Scotland with his hopes in France. The words, the looks of his mother, when she repelled Lord Roldan's offers, were uttered again, and present to his sight, and his own self-will and resolute pride would not allow him to imagine that she refused what her soul approved—that she was offering up her heart's blood on the altar of pride. All had come on him so suddenly that calm and temperate consideration was out of the question. Surprise and passion had united against serenity of judgment, and yet he could not but acknowledge, when in after life he passed all before him in tranquil review, that to have determined otherwise would have been difficult. He saw that Jeanie Rabson, whom he loved, and Rose Roldan, whom he admired, wondered at his pride and resolution; but he set down their views to the career which the marriage of his mother would have opened up to him. He did not reflect that they might be speaking from their knowledge of his mother's heart.

Absorbed in these dark reflections, no wonder that the ejaculations of honest Davie passed unheeded; but that resolute follower was not easily daunted or silenced: he made on a sudden a prodigious hop-step-and-leap before Morison, exclaiming, "Are we gaun to tie our senses to hizzie's apron strings in Galloway, when the sweet-lipped lasses o' Italy are just hanging like ripe clusters o' grapes ready for the pressing? I'm sick o' the sight o' that molehill called Criffel, and winna be happy till I stretch my right hand frae the Alps and glaum at Italy."

Morison could not but smile at the changed mood of his companion. "But, Davie," said he, "how will you escape from the matrimonial apron-string? Will the heiress, think ye, permit such desperate adventures? Will—"

"Ay, ay, rally awa," exclaimed the other, "muckle

cares Davie for woman's scorn or for man's wit. Has nae-body ever mistaken a hizzie's wish before, or thought themselves loved when they werna liked? But wha the deil may this be now? Morison! dod, this place has a kittle name—it has been aye said to be haunted wi' a headless woman—and though this seems a man—and a man it is. Od! what a lade is lifted frae my heart."

The person who approached was sauntering like a being without an aim; his arms were folded behind his back; his face was now turned to the earth; next moment it was contemplating the sky, and he was muttering to himself; some of the words were audible.

"Heard ye ever the like?" whispered Davie; "it's the ghaist o' some defunct bard—the words are awfu'!"

"It is a poet, and a bright one," said Morison. "You muse late, sir; what subject is present to the fancy of Burns?"

The great poet paused, glanced hastily around, then grasping the hand of Morison, said, "I have taken a poet's privilege, when I should have been watching defaulters of the revenue of our sovereign lord the king; but the subject of my meditations is neither the handsome Jean nor the lovely Phillis; step this way, I will tell you more in the shadow of the wood—there are other eyes than those above." They stepped into the wood which skirted the foot-path, and paused in a bower of holly.

"The voice of Coila will be heard here by me alone," said Morison; "speaks it of joy or of sorrow?"

"Of joy," replied Burns; "if you act with half the spirit which the world ascribes to you, and of sorrow if you linger long or pause; in a word, an armed vessel has dropped into the Solway to-night; armed men have been sent on shore; and the emissary of France—for such they call you—is watched by sea, and sought for by land. I could not know of this without a desire to warn you—may my warning be useful; may you follow out your bright career for the redemption of human nature! He who wishes this will not live to see it; the ground over which he walks gapes for him, but to the honour and glory of liberty shall the last song of Burns be dedicated. Farewell!" He wrung Morison's hand suddenly, descended into the little valley, and was seen no more.

Morison, familiar with every tree, and stone, and precipitous crag of the Elfin-glen, through which his way ran, soon reached the abode of his mother; it was nigh midnight.

"Oh, my son!" she exclaimed, clasping her arms around his neck, "I have entreated Him who can save to hold you in his keeping: for oh! I said, was he not torn away from my bosom when the milk was scarcely dry on his lips, and

now, when thou hast permitted his return in honour and glory, wilt thou allow him to be torn away a second time? And oh! Morison, fear the Lord! he will succour thee—I feel assured he will. A light brighter than that of the stars kindled around me as I prayed, and a wondrous courage and comfort were poured into my heart, when I mentioned the sufferings of my son.”

He returned her embrace, and mingled his tears with hers; her maids stood sobbing, and even Davie Gellock, who said his cheeks had never kenned whether a tear was hot or cold before, afterward owned that he felt something the matter wi’ his een; the lids kept wink, winking, and yet, said he, “it couldna be real greeting, for he had been flogged twice a day at school and didna greet.”

“Mother,” replied Morison, “I did not mean my visit to be a long one: it must yet be more brief than I intended. I am watched for by land and sea; and if I stay for the morning’s light a prison will be my doom. But though you may not hear from me whither I am going, you shall hear of me, and that with a voice which will tell Scotland that the son whom she thrust rudely from her bosom has found the safety abroad which he was refused at home, and may one day remember that she hunted him like a wild beast among her hills and valleys. God bless you! and may you not falter, but be true to your bastard boy. These twenty years have I had no father—a mother has made me what I am: and her love is honour enough.” He burst away from her and made his way into the interior with a rapidity which astonished his companion.

“Had I been married,” said Davie, “to the hizzie of Howeboddom, and asked for wings to flee awa frae her, I couldna hasten faster than I do now. They gallop fast wham deils and lasses drive. The latter may be said to drive me, and I sairly suspect that the former moves you, Morison. Where are ye gaun, gin a body may speer?”

Not a word, however, did Morison utter: over hill and through hollow he went, till Glengarnock was seven miles behind him; then descending into the vale of Barlochie, he paused where it opens on the sea.

“We have gained a march upon them, we have turned their flank,” said Davie in a whisper; “I understand ye now.”

“Yes,” answered Morison, ascending a knoll which commanded the land and sea to some extent. “Yonder is the royal vessel which hopes to take us far up the Solway, while the men whom she has sent to seize us are perhaps waiting the dawn of day to render the attempt surer. But here is our little pinnace; let us on board, give her sail to the breeze, and if wind and fortune befriend, we shall lead

them a chase; they may as well pursue a beam of the sun as our little ship."

The place in which the shallop lay moored was of great natural beauty; Morison might have cast a stone from side to side of the little bay, had he been willing to disturb the quiet loveliness of the spot, or unroost the sea fowl that displayed their white bosoms from the rising cliffs by which the haven was bounded and guarded. In summer-time, the crags were strewn with foxgloves and other vagrant flowers; at present they were shorn of their beauty somewhat, though the hazel, and holly, and barberry, still retaining their leaf, took away the idea of total barrenness, while a faint streak of light from the east touched the summit of the cliffs, and announced to the gulls, sea mews, and sea cormorants, that day was at hand. Nor did it announce daylight alone; it enabled Morison and his companion to see that the tide was all but full, while a feather shed from the neck of one of the sea birds, as it stretched its wings to welcome the morning, found a breeze which wafted it seaward, and showed as plain as with a tongue that the wind was propitious. Nor did the seamen who had charge of this frail vessel require to be roused and told what to do; the moment that Morison stepped on board they rose up, spread their sails, and taking up the halser moved away from land: the water foamed and flashed aside and behind; while the waves which she left flowed far upon the shore of the little bay, and the foam with which they were edged spread itself out along the spotless sand like rich broad lace, flowing over the white shoulders of some unconscious beauty.

"Deil hae me," said Davie, "but it's a bonnie bit! Weel, for snug nooks, fairy spots, and banks on which mermaids love to lie and toy with their lang locks in the moonshine, there's nae isle in a' God's ocean equal to our ain Scotland."

Morison stood for a while looking forward on the course which his little shallop was steering; but his mind soon wandered from the scene before him, and he was lost in rumination on late events, when the master touched his arm, and said, "Ware-hawk! down, flat as a pancake; we are scented, and must have a run for it. Why, what need was there to stand up as a signal pole with a flag o' top, to tell we were in the bay? We must not, however, seem to fly, else every bay will shoot out its armed craft against us, for we lie like the Isle of Man, in the lap of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and each of them will try to seize us by the leg."

Morison looked up the bay, and there, amid the long lines of sunlight which streamed from the summits of the eastern hills upon the Solway, he saw an armed sloop with all sails set, and wooing the breeze which had not then reached her, following on the path of his own little bark, and from the

bustle aloft and below, he guessed that she smelled her prey.

"Aweel," said one of the seamen, dropping as he spoke his line into the water armed with baited hooks, "gin I'm nae surer of catching a cod, than yon chaps are of catching us, I have small hopes of aught fresh for breakfast—there, now! by St. Bees, what a whopper! twenty pun weight, and as fat as a parson!"

"It's a bonnie fish," said Davie Gellock, loading his pistols and sticking them in his belt, "it's a bonnie fish; I hope the sea water winna damp my powder."

"Ye'll have nae need for powder, either wet or dry," answered the seaman. "Lord! an it come to that, man, how d'ye think our cockleshel of a shallop, no muckle bigger than the boat whilk auld Nanse Halberson makes out of a cast off slipper—how d'ye think—but I'll dip the heuk again, I can but try—how think ye, this eggshell thing would stand a shower of airn balls, ilka ane aughteen pound weight? By my saul, here's a second ane—fellow to the former—this is what I ca' luck. I can see that we are no to be ta'en this time; d'ye think that Providence wad find us in provisions—wad victual us out like an alderman's barge, if we are to be captured and canted into the empty air, wi' a tow round our necks, to hinder us from being hurt in the fall?—na, na."

"There's too much o' the slack, Robin, too much o' the slack," said the master; "it don't hinder your own hands, but it does the hands of others; don't you see they are coming down on us like a whirlwind—gaping for us, by goles! as if they would swallow us; bringing out, by the piper! one of their hollow customers on the forecastle to advise us to call a halt. They won't be such born jackasses sure, as to waste powder on us at this distance—and yet they are, by Heaven."

As he spoke, a stream of smoke rushed suddenly from the prow of the approaching sloop, and before the sound reached them, a ball came dip dipping like a sea mew that touches the top of the waves with its wings, then shakes the moisture off again, and sunk some hundred yards astern. "I told you so," said the master. "What dolts! thought no one but a Frenchman could have done such a thing—deserves to be rataned seven leagues on old shelly-coat Neptune's back for it—dash my old shoes, but here's more wastery! nay, the captain must be an ass—I'll warrant him some lord's son or another—a good fellow mayhap on a bowling green. Why after all he takes good aim—had that iron messenger reached us, Robin, it would have knocked us to chips—made shavings of us."

The seaman to whom these latter words were addressed had rebaited his hook, committed it to the deep, and now

stood watching it with an earnestness of mind and eye, as if no danger pressed or approached. "Whisht, whisht," he said, in an under tone, "he's nibbling—he's nibbling—ae fish is hope, twa fish is hope doubled; three fish—and here he is as I'm a sinner—Lord! what a whale!—three fish—gosh, he'll whamble me, thirty pound weight if he's an unce—three fish is success, whether it be battle wi' man or wi' the elements; now he is landed, and we're safe:" and he placed the three fish together, regarding them with a complacency in which his comrades shared.

"Deil hae me," exclaimed Davie, "if I can see the humour on't; what will three cod—and ane of them is no real cod, but a dinman—how will three of the best fish that ever swam in Solway help us in this strait? Here's this deil's buckie of a sloop of war, ready to put her net owre us—and we'll find it a close herling-bosom, out of which there's nae chance of escape. But I'se hae a kick at them. Here's my lang rifle whilk I brought frae Hispaniola; many a negro it has shot as well as sundry Spaniards, and surely it will do as much for yon damned pea-jacket that stands forward, looking at us through his glass; but what's the matter now?"

"Sit down, and I'll tell you," said the mariner who commanded; "nay, lie down, for that will be better; what are you afraid of? d'ye think a goose can catch an eagle? we have been dallying, my lad, merely to lay suspicion asleep, but now we are taking to our scrapers; we are stretching out our wings; see, how old ocean foams around us; hear what a commotion the subsiding foam makes, like to a thousand frying pans."

Morison sat in perfect composure: he had an internal consciousness that his race was not to close at the morning hour, and was busied in raising those bright structures of political grandeur, of which all youthful spirits have visions and revelations. On earth, one universal republic in which all would be brothers, mind tied to mind by the bonds of art, and science, and learning, and literature; all rank save that of nature abolished, and simplicity and virtue restored: such were his visions, but they were not shared by any of his present companions.

Davie had never been able to comprehend Morison's speculations; he, however, had faith in them at times. "Am I no to believe in the rule of three in vulgar fractions," he thus reasoned, "because I canna work it on the slate, or put nae trust in cross multiplication, because inches multiplied by inches disna produce inches, though I think they should, since feet multiplied by feet give feet? These things ance a mystery are aye a mystery, and this liberty and equality is likely to remain a mystery wi' me too. For supposing now we were a' as lang, and as handsome, and as strang as ane anither, losh what a difference in understanding! some are

just dungeons o' wit, while others have nae as muckle sense as a hen could haud in her steeked neeve." Davie relin- quished his attempts at the solution of political mysteries, and thought again upon the slight he had endured from the saucy heiress of Howeboddom.

"I wonder," said he to himself, "how I could be sae saft. I depended owre muckle on outward looks"—here he eyed himself from the feet upward—"and owre muckle on the fame acquired in helping Morison up the hill. Dod! I thought an auld hen like her, for she's forty every hour—an auld chuckie, such as Jean, wad hae luppen at me, like a cock at a grozel."

The sloop of war which held them in chase hung out signals, and from each roadstead in sight armed boats or ships were put in motion; but the wind from the Irish shore, the whole way down the channel, locked all in so strongly, that no effectual attempt could be made to intercept them, while a mist which came creeping over the sea as the wind calmed, screened them at last from sight, and baffled pursuit.

"Thank you," said the commander; "thank you for your misty mantle. Had it not been for thee I think Robin's three fish could not have saved us. The whole coast of merry Old England is alive with armed ships."

"Haud your tongue, Herbert," said the Scot, "dinna doubt what is doomed. The mist was part of the predesti- nation o' the thing. I never doubted after I got the nibble of the third that a' wad rowe right: I foretauld what has come to pass."

"Curse me, then, if ye foretauld that!" said Herbert, point- ing seaward. "Who the-devil would have thought it: see, she shows her hull through the mist like a cathedral, and her masts look as if they would bore a hole in the sky; but yarely, my lads, we'll do her yet."

This new alarm arose from a line-of-battle ship which half burst through the mist, but disappeared in a moment, though not without intimating her notion of their character by a couple of shots, which flew over their heads, while part of the wadding dropped on a small cask of powder; Davie tossed it into the sea, saying, "A spark and powder's hasty elding."

"We are safe from everything but such accidents as this," said Herbert. "By goles! had yon lubber thrown a ton of his iron aboard of us, down we must have gone, in spite of Robin here and his Solway cod. Dash my old shoes! I can't credit these queer come-owre-me's; I have seen the wind rise when I whistled on't; I have seen a fellow bore a hole in a Memel log and draw Brabant wine from it, and I have bought a bladder full of right wind from an old lass in Lapland—but three Solway cod! Blow me tight, but—that's a good un—it puts my pipe out."

To this strange colloquy Morison listened and smiled, for

he came from a coast where many wild maritime beliefs lingered, nor was he wholly free from such influences. He had heard sounds at night on the Solway side, which he could not imagine to be of this world, and had seen lights in the haunted glens which he could not reconcile with matters earthly.

"Hou that's naught!" said Davie; "there's Nanse Halberson for a blaw of tobacco wad send me a wind to waft me frae the Indies to the Pole; and as for drawing wine frae a tree, what mair marvel is it than drawing nutbrown ale frae the bearded barley? But if ye want to hear o' real marvels ye should gang to auld Fluke Faulder, of Allonbay; he built a bark whilk wind could nae upset, wave swallow, nor fire burn; I have seen him in't when a' the winds of heaven were let loose on the Solway—when the sea miew couldna keep i' the air, and the very fish were blawn out o' the water; there he rode singing like a mavis. Dod! he has had fish at Kirkcudbright cross, when neither a Maclellan nor a Maculloch—twa o' the bauldest names in Galloway—dared man a boat or dip a haave."

"Right, dash my wig, right!" exclaimed the master, "I knows old Faulder; have had many a rouse with him on the Kentish shore; he's like me; knows every coast, fears neither keelman nor kelpie, man nor mermaid; has a heart as sound as a new nine-inch cable, and's generally as drunk as the Baltic: I knows old Faulder well."

During these odd colloquies, and conversations of the like kind, the shallop held on her course without interruption; the wind was fair, and though the first flight of the mist had yielded to breeze and sun, the air was hazy, and nothing could be seen beyond gunshot distance. On the second night of their voyage the air grew dark, the sea gurlly, and the wind stooping down by fits lifted up foam and spray, and scattered them thickly through the air, and made exposure unpleasant. On the left, too, they heard the uproar of waves among the rocks, and now and then they could observe the iron-bound coast of England, over whose cliffs the white foam was flung far inland. "God have a care on us!" exclaimed Davie Gelloch, "whatna fearfu' flare's yon? there's a ball of fire hung in the heaven as big as a hundred moons; yon coves a'—it comes for nae good; some nation or some individual is about to kick the bucket."

"By goles, now!" exclaimed the master, "but this is funny; your ignorance is as deep as an unplumbed sea. Ay, indeed, it is a wondrous light! bless the head that conceived it and the hand that lighted it; but for it, ten thousand thousand men had gone to the bottom, or been dashed on the rocks. Hark! don't you hear the growling of ravening sea monsters? they are angry that we have not sailed down their gullets. Bless, say I, the light of Eddystone."

Davie shrugged his shoulders. "And what is't after a'," cried he, "but a bourack o' stanes and a cruzie o' oil on the tap on't? Dod! there's little that I see wordy of blessing about it; it's just a light, and sae's a bawbee candle."

The land of France was a welcome sight; they anchored in a little bay on the south side of the harbour of Brest, about the dawn of the third morning of their adventurous voyage, and Morison and Davie, having bid farewell to their companions, set forward without delay to unite themselves with the army, which, under the eye of Napoleon, was about to precipitate itself upon Italy. Morison observed that a change had already commenced in the kingdom; confidence, under the influence of the Child of Destiny, was beginning to return; music and dancing were renewed in the villages; men were busied in the fields and in the manufactories; and that dread engine, the guillotine, had ceased to exercise its edge on the necks of the sons and daughters of men. As they neared the frontier long lines of artillery filled the way; squadrons of horse followed, while regiments of foot might be observed in the distance, marching along the ground, which, swelling from the plains, formed the base of those stupendous mountains which sunder France and Italy.

Morison halted at the door of a cabaret; two or three horses bridled and saddled stood in the small court, and their owners, occupying a room in the interior, were enjoying a bottle of Burgundy. They were young men, officers evidently of rank; Morison seated himself at a small table on the opposite side of the room, called for refreshments; nor did he remark, for some time, that they were conversing about a matter which interested him.

"Well, no matter," said one, "widow or maid, she's a handsome one, and since our general loves her, I drink her health."

"Yes," replied a second, "but her first husband was an enemy to the republic; his wife had put it into his head that she was to be an empress, and the born fool imagined, forsooth, that he would be emperor, and as a republic did not seem the right road to such honour, he turned traitor; I saw his head nipped neatly off by old Mother Guillotine. What have you to say to the contrary, sir?" addressing Morison; "I see by your eye that you wish to contradict me."

All eyes were in a moment turned on Morison. "I have but this to say, sir," replied he, "that I knew General Beaumharnois, and France will ere long own that she destroyed one of her bravest leaders without cause."

"Which means," answered the other, "that I have told what is untrue; your words must be justified with your sword."

"They shall not want such justification, should it be ne-

cessary," said Morison; "but I have not accused you of falsehood; I have but said that France acted unjustly."

"I might have forgiven a personal reproach," replied the other, fiercely, "but he who insults my nation must keep a sword ready to justify it: mine is out, sir! follow, else I shall strike you where you sit."

"You shall not need, sir," replied Morison, following the other. They were not well over the threshold till they crossed weapons, and foot to foot, and hand to hand, engaged with equal ardour, and with equal skill. The Frenchman at first made light of his antagonist, and seemed anxious to disarm him, and so close the contest without blood: he soon found this to be no safe experiment; an attempt or two, from which he did not escape without a wound, admonished him that he had met his match: but this pleased rather than enraged him; he rejoiced that he had found one worthy of his steel, and smiled on Morison, as with equal activity and skill he eluded or warded the rapid and scientific thrusts which he made. For a full quarter of an hour had the combat lasted, and though the Frenchman was taller and stronger, and equally active, he had obtained no advantage over the Scot, to whose hand the sword seemed as natural as the claw is to the eagle; nay, victory appeared to incline to the latter, when the trumpets which sounded clamorously to horse interrupted the combat.

"There's my hand, sir, and we are friends if you like it," said the Frenchman sheathing his sword. "Has your country any more such? France has but one Lannes."

"My isle," said Morison, receiving his hand warmly, "has not one who would not defend the honour of the unhappy dead."

Lannes held out both hands—"Shame," he said, "that a stranger should love better than I, what is noble and heroic! We are friends from this moment, if you had slain my younger brother."

"Nay, you must admit me, sir islander, to your friendship also," said one of the comrades of Lannes, tossing the snowy plumes of his helmet as he spoke; "Murat loves a fine swordsman."

CHAPTER IX.

Now therefore, kings, be wise : be taught,
 Ye judges of the earth :
 Serve God in fear, and see that ye
 Join trembling with your mirth.

The Psalm.

THE snow had left the vales ; the trees were bursting into bud ; the lilies of the field were holding their heads southward ; the birds were carolling from bush and bough, and the sun, waxing warmer and warmer, was awakening new beauty and fresh fragrance every hour. We dare not say that the French marched with unconscious feet and eyes over the loveliness of the fields, and under the pure blue canopy of heaven, for there were thousands in their ranks who looked with a poet's eye and felt with a poet's heart, and who in their meditative moments would not have presumed to tread down a flower rudely—but an ardour unfelt before kindled their minds ; they were on a crusade on behalf of liberty ; each soldier believed that, compared to himself, the highest prince was a reptile ; and all their talk, and all their songs, were about conquering kingdoms, crushing thrones, and setting the feet of freemen on the necks of kings. In this high-wrought and ecstatic mood, they were not likely to regard much on what they trod ; yet, when the vales of Italy appeared like a dream of paradise at their feet, as they gazed from the uplands, they held out their hands, as if to grasp their new inheritance, and pronounced it a more exquisite France.

This new and coveted inheritance, though inhabited by slaves, was not to be had without violence and blood ; all nations did not bend the knee to the idol liberty ; nay, some boldly avowed their love for the old patriarchal mode of government, and preferred the splendour of a monarchy to the simple beauty of a republic. It seemed to be the opinion of common soldier, captain, and commandant, that those who presumed to differ from the creed of the French republic, in all matters, civil, domestic, political, and religious, were not only slaves and the sons of slaves, but had forfeited all right to breathe the free air of heaven, or inherit the earth. Now the people of the lovely land on which those new teachers of happiness at present looked, were an indolent race, who loved to crush the rich clusters of the grape, lie in the shade of their own fig trees, and enjoy the melody of the breezes and the music of the birds. Though descended from the con-

querors of the earth, a few centuries of quiet in their luxurious climate had tamed the fierce spirit for which the world once had not room; nay, they had in their turn yielded to a people whom they stigmatized as barbarous; and the blue-eyed Germans now held rule over the inheritance of the Scipios and Cæsars, and were prepared to dispute the advance of Napoleon and his fiery republicans, with arms to which they were inured, and with a discipline in which they fully confided.

With the sea on the right, and the Alps on the left—his army partly extending along the narrow plain, and occupying the ascent of the mountains—the Child of Destiny advanced. He was accompanied by many of his old companions in arms, some of whom his sagacity had picked out of the ranks, while others had before distinguished themselves in the front of battle, and stood second to him alone in the estimation of their country. The sun was nigh setting, when reaching the ruins of a castle which occupied a rough steep hill that partly commanded the line of march, Morison beheld, for the first time, the promised land, where the sordid soldier hoped for gain, the higher minded for glory, while not a few regarded it as the true native soil of a republic, since that of Rome had rooted there so deeply.

When Morison entered the ruin, he found Napoleon surrounded by many of his best officers.

"Ha! Roldan," he exclaimed, "thou art as welcome as a good sword is to a practised hand. There Italy, beauteous Italy, lies like a virgin on a bed of lilies; the boldest wooer is surest of success. We are all resolved to contend for her charms to-morrow."

"She is unlike other beauties," answered Morison, "if she is averse to a nocturnal visit; but the Austrian is nigh, and seems unwilling that others should approach her couch."

"Is he so gallant," said Napoleon, "as that? But, Roldan, my friend, you have been in soft society since I saw you—you have learned the figurative language of love, and speak of iron matters as maidens do of laced mantuas."

"He won't fight the worse of that," said Lannes; "we tried our swords—not on the air, general, like the young heroes of Ossian—and my report is, that better never bore a brand."

"Ah! if he fought with Lannes, and lives to tell it, he is sufficiently brave for any deed of daring—but I must have a look at these same Austrians." So saying, Napoleon ascended the shattered staircase of the castle, and seating himself with some dozen or so of his leaders on the summit, looked seaward and landward—on his own armed battalions, drawn up in close and compact order, within grasp as it seemed of his hand, and the equally compact but disunited masses of the Austrians, occupying the vale which opened wider and wider before him.

The evening was serene; the sun had withdrawn from the valley land, and his yellow light died the tree and tower tops, and descended halfway down the mountains. Cities, with spires, and palaces, and churches of polished marble, appeared in the distance; magnificent ruins, whose floors had echoed to the steps of the Cæsars, rose amid corn fields. To him who thought but of the ancient of days, the land supplied ample matter for reflection; while for those to whom the present was everything, and the past nothing, there was enough of beauty to excuse even rapture.

As Napoleon gazed earnestly upon the scene, his attention was called to a power which hitherto he had overlooked: one of his divisions, hastening to take up its ground, approached the shore, when a vessel, which till now had lain like a sleeping turtle on the waters, suddenly hoisted British colours, and at the same moment sent a shower of iron ashore among the masses of infantry. It was but the work of a minute for the general of the division to withdraw his men from the range of the ship's broadside, and at the same time to bring up a dozen pieces of artillery, which returned the shower, and compelled the ship of the line, for such it was, to move farther into the ocean.

"These countrymen of thine, Roldan," said Napoleon, with a smile, "are brave fellows on the waters; when we have settled the business of the earth, we shall have time to talk to them about the rights of man on the waves."

"Settle the business of the whole earth!" cried Murat; "to do that we must all mount on horseback and fight at a gallop."

When Murat of the white plume said this, he took off his helmet, allowed his long hair to fall over his shoulders, and drawing himself up to his whole height, seemed to challenge admiration, for he was not unconscious that his form was elegant, his horsemanship surpassing, and his skill with the sword all but unequalled. Beside him stood Lannes, whom those of a classic turn called the Ajax, and those of a romantic one, the Roland of the camp. He was tall and muscular, and formed for feats of agility and strength: he seemed careless about the niceties of dress; yet he was neat, and it was evident that he delighted in weapons of the finest quality and most exquisite workmanship; for he carried not only a blade of the rarest temper, but also a brace of pistols, inlaid by the hand of an artist skilful in matters of beauty. Far different from these republican heroes both in person and equipments, was their already celebrated leader: his person indeed was finely shaped, but it was under the middle size; while his clothes seemed made at a venture, and appeared rather to be heaped upon him than to dress him. He carried a sword of an ordinary fashion at his side, and in the bosom of his coat a sheet of paper, on which were delineated the

features of the country now held by the French and Austrian armies. Morison looked less anxiously on the enemies' masses, than he looked on Napoleon and his comrades in arms; and he could not help feeling that it was a daring adventure, to beard discipline troops, and officers gray in experience, with soldiers raised yesterday, led by officers whose honours had been all won in a couple of campaigns.

Napoleon appeared to read his looks. "Well, and what think you of it, Citizen Roldan? Will exact, but nerveless tactics prevail against the fiery ecstacy of such charges as ours? we shall dissipate them like a cobweb."

"They will resist us the less," replied Morison, "that they are dispersed in divers masses; we may sweep away one, before the next can come to its support."

"Why you have studied war, Roldan," said his general; "I must keep you at my right hand to-morrow, were it but to see Murat of the white plume charging with all his chivalry, and Lannes rushing like one of your own impetuous streams, with nothing on earth equal to the strength of staying him. They would have been blazoned in eternal glory, had they lived and warred in the days of Homer or Ossian."

"Who knows," said Lannes, "but having fought under the eye and command of Napoleon, may be of greater blazon! for myself, I care but to conquer, because it is his pleasure, and my highest wish is to die in the achievement of some great victory where he is the leader."

Napoleon was touched with this; he seized the hand of Lannes, and said, "I found thee a dwarf, and now thou art almost a giant; bloody will be the field, when thy valour fails. If I outlive thee, I shall have such blazonment of thee, as inspired song, and inspired marble can make, but we have the world to divide first."

An officer who had hitherto been silent smiled, as he said, "The desire of my brother Lannes is not in the strict spirit of citizenship; a true Frenchman fights but to defend his country, or confer his birthright on others; he has no personal views. I love my general much, but I love my country and liberty more. Fy on thee, Lannes! thou art sinning the sin of idolatry."

"Ho, ho! Citizen Bernadotte!" exclaimed Murat, "are these your notions still? a new light is awakening upon us, we have been long enough ruled by the inkhorn and pen, and tied up in red tape. Gad! it is time for the sword to rule a little. Are we to be checked in our march, and bid face to the right or to the left, by a little club of attorneys? No, no, the army is the convention, the general is the president, and the rattle of the artillery, and the rushing of the cavalry, not inaptly represent the noisy eloquence which used to stun me when I listened in the galleries."

"Right, Joachim, right!" exclaimed Lannes, "I was born

in a bivouac, amid knapsacks and swords—my music is the fife—my law is the sword—my general is the deity whom I worship, and were he to bid me charge the devil on his burning throne, I should even venture on the brimstone. I have heard of conventions and councils of five hundred : but here we have a council of fifty thousand. What rare advice, general, shall we give poor old dotard Italy to-morrow !”

“My children,” said Napoleon, “ye all speak well ; each according to nature ; but some of you have spoken rashly of the powers which preside over the destinies of France. Bernadotte, here, is a citizen after the mould and sentiment of Sparta ; Joachim, there, loves to wave his white plumes in the van, and rush on the enemies of his country, without being at all querulous in the matter of quarrel ; while Lannes, honest Lannes, has never been able to distinguish between an aristocrat and a republican ; yet he is his country’s gallant soldier for all that ; and I must excuse his freedom of speech, since I know his heart is steadfast and true.”

The brow of Bernadotte became clouded. “Ignorance,” said he, “Citizen Lannes, agrees ill with freedom ; it is the business of each citizen to know the duty which he owes to his country, and to practise it strictly. That man cannot truly enjoy the glory of independence who is unable to define what it is. Come to my tent, and I shall have pleasure in instructing thee—thou art a gallant soldier.”

“Ay, go,” said Napoleon, calmly, “Bernadotte will teach you all the varieties of French liberty and equality ; you will learn that the citizens of ninety thought differently from those of eighty-nine ; that those of ninety-one changed their creed from that of the year preceding ; that honest ninety-two called ninety-one a knave ; while ninety-three reckoned his elder brother a rogue ; then came cut-throat ninety-four, followed by his son ninety-five, and their constitution was planned in proscription, and consolidated by the guillotine. Oh ! he will read you such a lesson on constitutions, and sing you the long song of the revolution with all the varieties. No, Bernadotte—take my friend Roldan to your tent, and illumine his ignorance with your lights ; but leave me my Lannes—I cannot afford to lose him.”

With the morning dawn the army was in motion : it was the aim of Napoleon to precipitate his masses on a point where the Austrian array was weak, and crush and dissipate them in detail. To accomplish this, great activity was necessary. “I wish to spoil your shoes, rather than spill your blood, my lads,” he said to the grenadiers, led by the intrepid Lannes, as they rushed, rather than marched, past him. “Murat,” he exclaimed, “I have another white plume for you, should you stain that one with smoke—sent by a fair hand too.” Low bowed the delighted soldier to the mane of his horse, and crimsoned to the eyes, for he knew that

Napoleon alluded to his sister Elizabeth. "Bernadotte, my friend," he said, taking the hand of that great general, "we shall see to-day the result of those mathematical combinations of battle which we have studied together. I need not tell you, that expedition is the second great rule in our new tactics—we should pray for the swiftness of eagles." The division quickened its pace. "It is not necessary," said Napoleon, "to urge the impetuous Lannes; his sword is ever flaming in his hand, and his soul ever burning in his body for action: I found him in the ranks, but what could keep down such a spirit, save a monarchy? I have seen him do as many wondrous deeds as would help an epic to enough of the marvellous; I have no other fear but that in some bloody and doubtful day—having done more than man can do—he will attempt the impossible and die. Your moment of action is coming, Roldan; why I vow you are as impatient as Murat or Lannes."

The looks of Morison were fixed on the motions of the Austrian army; they were moving in three masses; the intervals between the divisions were large, and though the commanders were manœuvring so as to close up the spaces and unite the whole into one body, the movements were so slow, that to a ready and quick adversary they presented several vulnerable points, of which no advantage was yet taken. Morison opened his palm and then closed it, and drawing down his brows till his large bright eyes, more than half concealed, glimmered like kindling fires, exclaimed unconsciously—"Time was, time is, and time will soon be no more."

"Ha!" said Napoleon, "I ask but a minute more—and I have got it, by Heaven! Hark, hark! Is that thunder or the sound of artillery?"

"Thunder, I think," replied Morison.

"Yes, my young friend, it is thunder—but it is the thunder which blood follows. See, see! it is the child of victory! Gods how astonished the Austrians are at yon unlooked-for apparition; Massena, from thee let all Frenchmen come and learn the art of executing with the rapidity of a thunder bolt our new combinations of war." The march of Massena, screened for a league by woods, and knolls, and ravines, was unperceived by the enemy till the moment they sought to close their columns, and then he rushed upon them with horse and foot through the smoke and hail of a hundred pieces of artillery.

Two divisions of the enemy were thus held at arm's length, till the third was assailed and crushed; Lannes forced his way through the very centre of their position: Murat with all his cavalry made repeated charges on their flanks: Bernadotte seized eminence after eminence, to which the

reeling enemy looked for shelter; and the mighty mass forced into the vale, and vexed by sword, by bayonet, and by shot, weltered this way and that, like a whale in the ocean, into whose exhausted body harpoon after harpoon is thrust and thrown.

In the midst of this singular strife, the half of one of the Austrian divisions, which Massena sought to intercept, forced its way through a wood, hitherto deemed impenetrable, and ascending out of the ravine, which till now concealed them, formed on the open and level ground, and pouring in a volley upon Murat and his cavalry, levelled their bayonets and charged. The eminence—a craggy one—on which Napoleon stood, lay almost in the line of their fire, and the balls came whistling through the air to the right and to the left, while others sank into the sward almost at his feet, and threw the earth and grass about him. The French for a few minutes were on this point sorely pressed, and Murat whose snowy plume hovered amid the dark smoke of battle, like a white dove sailing amid the eddying reek of a burning city, poured charge after charge without effect.

“But where now, Roldan?” exclaimed Napoleon, detaining him by one of the golden cords of his general’s dress, “stay, my friend; let Murat extricate himself as he best may.”

Morison pointed with one hand to the French reserve, and with the other to the Austrian division.

“And where will my army be in an hour, if I risk my reserve? My combinations were perfect, but my officers lack foresight; stay, my friend.” Morison almost struggled to go, and while Napoleon detained him by the golden cord, a musket ball severed it in two.

“Go,” exclaimed the general, “destiny decides for you!” And he looked at the tassel which was left in his grasp, and then at Morison, who, hastening to the reserve, led them to the charge; the woody ravine through which the Austrian column had so lately marched received back their bleeding and diminished ranks, and the victory was achieved.

Thus the reluctant gate of the garden of Italy was opened, and in streamed the conquerors to pluck the fruit and revel among the flowers. The followers of Napoleon were all of the right martial stamp: France, at that period, obtained for her battles young men of talent and character: she did not recruit among the jails, nor the houses of correction, for the purpose of making heroes out of the unchanged blackguards of her land. Neither did she seek for leaders among the rich and the influential alone: the brave and the sagacious rose from the ranks into command, and most of her great leaders were of humble birth. The first burst of her revolution brought all the genius of the land into action; merit—merit alone, was regarded; and but for that, Bernadotte

would have died in the ranks; Murat would have continued a private trooper; and Napoleon himself, risen no higher than a captain of engineers. The mighty tree of the aristocracy blighted with its shade all that grew beneath, but when it was stricken down and consumed with fire, the sun again warmed the earth and nature resumed her free functions.

"I watch my men in quarters, on march, and in battle," said Napoleon, "and he who is the best and bravest, is marked out for promotion—the dull and the inapt are not stamped for advancement."

But though Napoleon had entered the garden, he was not allowed to pluck the fruit nor enjoy the flowers without opposition. The Austrians were stunned, rather than vanquished; new troops, led by other generals, came pouring out of Germany; but the Child of Destiny triumphed over them by valour as well as by science; and in two or three decisive battles, told the world that the new republic had produced a system of martial tactics, and a soldier, before whom the ancient monarchies of the world would be commanded to bow. The thrones of Italy trembled; nor was the spiritual Prince of St. Peter's without his fears; he thought of the sack of Rome by the Protestant followers of the Catholic Bourbon, and shuddered amid his infallibility, lest his temples should be profaned, and his treasury ransacked, by men who doubted everything and believed nothing. Nor must we conceal, that he heard too with alarm, that the French leader had a taste for rare manuscripts, and pictures, and statues, and had already, in the spirit of equal division, despatched paintings as well as prisoners—statues as well as flags, to France. How to stay this armed torrent his holiness was unable to divine: the saints had been so often appealed to without profit, that he put no trust in their mediation; and he bethought him of appeasing this new Alaric through the medium of gold. He was, however, too wily to move in the matter himself: he heard with joy of the arrival of a British nobleman of the ancient faith, and to him he confided some of his fears, and the whole of his offers. The island envoy was too proud or too pious to accept the gold of the church for his mediation, but he obtained an ample remission for sins past of which he gave in a large list, and indulgence for the future, and then took his leave for the purpose of seeking an interview with the French leader.

The bridge of Lodi had been passed, and Napoleon was about to advance, when he was informed that a confidential friend of his holiness desired an interview with him in a neighbouring palace.

"Ha!" exclaimed he; "but destiny will not allow; the Austrian menaces me, yonder fly his eagles: I am on the edge of battle; moreover I am infected with the philosophi-

cal heresy, and may not be amenable to the admonitions of mother church. Go thou, my friend Roldan; thy heresy wears the venerable aspect of two centuries, and this holy man may be less severe with thee, than with a new schismatic. What is the costume of the negotiator?—wears he the cardinal's cap?"

Napoleon uttered all this carelessly, and while he was busied examining a map of the country with a pair of compasses—Murat whispered a word in his ear.

"Ah! then Roldan is the fit person; the idea came by inspiration. But hold!—here, you engineer, what is your name? Is this a lake or a valley?—you should draw more clearly."

"Neither," briefly answered the draughtsman; "it is a bit of marshy ground—passable for foot, difficult for horse."

"So, so, that's good; you are an observant officer; I shall know your face again when the hour of promotion comes—that is, if the ground answers to the description. Well, Roldan, and what says the ambassador?"

"You have not given me my instructions yet, general; give them, and I shall be expeditious; for the hour of battle approaches."

Napoleon applied again his compasses to the map and scale; his looks cleared up as he mused; he looked with a smile—an omen of victory—around him, and, seeing Morison, said, "Hear all—promise nothing: if we are threatened, threaten again: away with thee, Roldan. Nay, stop, it is but fair to tell thee that this suppliant on behalf of his holiness is one of your own island nobles; you will find him cold and tall as a rock of ice, as Ossian expresses it; go to him. But stay, you must not approach him as you are, lest he should say his countrymen are not honoured. Take your general's truncheon—let two eagles be borne before you; Junot, you can write in a volcano, note down the proposals; and Roldan, let fiery expedition be your guide—we are on the edge of battle and want you."

The way to the palace lay through a grove of statues; there the austere composure and poetic loftiness of Grecian sculpture mingled with the more literal transcripts from life by the Romans, while figures and groups of the later Italian school, which sought to unite the qualities of several styles, and rose at least to the picturesque, abounded. With these were mixed fig trees so old looking and so large, that their boughs may have sheltered the austere dames of the Cæsars, or afforded shade to the wild warriors of Alaric; here and there, too, a broken column or a defaced capital gave intimation that luxury was no new thing to this domain, while fountains invisible among the woods, threw up their streams of water into the sunny air, and diffused freshness over lawn, and garden, and grove.

"A fine place," said Junot, "for a battle; these statues

and trees to protect the flank ; that old temple in the wood, for our left to rest on ; and this mansion—palace, what d'ye call it?—to form the key to our position. I wonder that Napoleon, who is fond of such associations, overlooked a station so classical."

Morison smiled as he answered, " Would you bait a bull in a bed of lilies ! Is there not enough of waste land in Italy to fatten with blood, that you should desire to make this lovely spot into a slaughterhouse ! Why some of these statues have the stamp of an immortal sentiment upon them, and he who would wantonly deface them, must have a body out of which the spirit of God has walked : but here we are on the threshold, and the doors of the audienceroom stand open. Let us enter."

The hall into which Morison and Junot were ushered was a magnificent one. Architecture had called on her companions, sculpture and painting, to aid in its splendour, and so beautifully had each striven for the mastery, that it was impossible to decide which had triumphed. The columns and architraves—nay, the walls were of rich and variegated marble, wrought with geometric accuracy and polished like mirrors : the statues of the elder chiefs of Italy stood, each serenely in his place, nor did the pictures, amid all the vividness of their expression, disturb the tranquil elegance intended by the master mind which planned it. All around, too, stood cabinets of rare books and rare manuscripts ; and, as if the fragrance of the terraced garden, down the slopes of which the open windows looked, had not been sufficient, scents of the most delicate kinds had been showered about till the whole smelled like the morning air passing over a bed of flowers, out of which the sun is drinking the dew. In the centre of this dazzling hall stood Prince Parmiano, shining in velvet and gold, and fanning the carpet with his plumed hat ; other Italian dignitaries stood nigh, while the centre was occupied by a tall, pale, handsome man, richly but plainly dressed. Morison bowed ; the other bowed, and bowed too to Junot, who, advancing at the same time, stood beside Morison and seemed willing at least to share, if not usurp his mission.

A deep flush passed over the youthful and handsome features of Morison, as he looked on his father, for it was Lord Roldan who stood before him, while his lordship, looking at Junot, said, " I am commanded by the holy head of the church—in whose hands are the keys of hell and heaven—at whose breath kings reign or cease to reign—"

" Ho, ho !" exclaimed Junot, dashing to the floor a large china vase, which, full of ambrosial essences, scented the place. " Go tell the hoary impostor, who holds in imagination the keys of apartments above and below, that we are on our march to Rome, and will scatter his kingdom into as

many fragments as there are chips of that gilded potsherd on this palace floor. I marvel, General Roldan, that you could submit to such a description of a mere mortal!" When Junot had done this, he sat down abruptly in a state chair in which the princes of the land were anointed, making his sword rattle against the inlaid cabinets, and pulling out a piece of cartridge paper, sullied with gunpowder, and mending a pencil, exclaimed, "To business, General Roldan! to business! Napoleon waits, and a battle abides us!"

This rude episode was not unwelcome to Morison: he was for a moment oppressed by feelings which he could not master; he regained, after a brief struggle, his accustomed composure, and turning to Lord Roldan, said in a calm voice, "Address yourself to me—I am General Roldan."

Lord Roldan bent on Morison a look almost amounting to fierceness, and turning to the prince, said, "Are the destinies of Italy, and the interests of nations, confided to this person?"

"I am a man, my lord," said Morison; "if you are more, say it, that I may make obeisance—I respect the gods—"

"Good, good!" muttered Junot; "Gad, Nap will smile at this—there it is, written down."

"I am of ancient blood and of unspotted birth, and so far am I superior to the person who stands before me."

"My lord," answered Morison, "make the most of your advantages; their lease is nigh run; the time is at hand, when sense, and worth, and genius will resume their sway, and hereditary rank, whether of prince or of peer, will be thrown aside as a piece of rent apparel. You seem surprised that the destinies of nations should be confided to one so humble; what is it but the natural, the inborn right of man asserting mental superiority. I am—thanks to the crimes of rank—now of a nation which, casting down all distinctions which fraud or folly raised, places its children, real or adopted, on a footing of equality, and bids them run the race of fame fairly. Had your lordship been one of the runners, I say not that you would have been surpassed, but you would at least have won your honours yourself, instead of receiving them from your ancestors."

"Good again," muttered Junot, who thought on his own rise at the siege of Toulon. "Why Roldan speaks like one inspired—but this fine Madame Equality, whom he worships, has her favourites, and that he'll find—have I written that down?—let it stand for the sake of its truth. I marvel what this will all end in?"

"And are these your visions?" exclaimed Lord Roldan. "Why did the spiritual prince of the earth send me to parley with a nation of madmen, who cannot perceive that God, in his wisdom or in his wrath, has made men unequal in strength and stature, mental and bodily. Liberty! why should such a passionate and erring creature as man have a boon which

he has not the soul to enjoy? Equality! why should men shed seas of blood to establish what cannot exist? The very violence by which they seek it is an assurance that it cannot be; they ask for it in arms, yet cannot observe, that in their obedience to discipline and leaders, they are worshipping the very idol which they desire to pull down."

"Good!" said Junot: "some now would call that sophistry; but it must be owned that an army under strict command presents but a poor image of liberty. It's fine talking of equality with a staff officer; I have put that down too; it will amuse the little corporal."

"I come not here, my lord," said Morison, "to discuss whether the one half of mankind should have saddles on their backs and bridles in their lips, that the other half who are booted and spurred may ride them; but I come to hear what his holiness has to say: be brief."

"When I undertook the office of mediator," replied Lord Roldan, haughtily, "I imagined that I should have an interview with men of birth and breeding, with whom I could converse without feeling degraded; but, lo! one of the delegates of this great republic, one and indivisible, is a vulgar trooper, raised from the ranks for a fit of random courage—the cheapest of all commodities; and the other—"

"The other, my lord," replied Morison, "is one who never knew a father—was abandoned to a cold and unfeeling world—was thrust out of a land where he all but begged his bread, that he might die unknown in obscurity; and is now in high command and unbounded trust, and hopes that the day is not distant when he shall help to make the men of his own, his native isle as free as the wind of their own mountains, and teach the proud aristocracy to value humble worth." He pulled his sword half out of his sheath as he said this, and thrust it back with a clang which made all present start, save the stern messenger of his holiness.

Lord Roldan turned to the prince, and said, "The devil was the first democrat, and all that man got by it was the loss of paradise: it was a light which led to hell, and not to heaven. So these, and such as these, are the men who, with the sword in their hands, and with benevolence on their lips, go forth to the nations, calling out with every blow, 'Liberty and Equality!' Vain, vulgar desperadoes! do they hope to extinguish a light which Heaven kindled a thousand years ago? Adieu, Messieurs Republicans, I break off our parley."

"Farewell!" said Morison; "but as we are about to advance, and we move as though we were winged, this passport will protect you and yours from all interruption."

Lord Roldan folded his arms, bowed a refusal, and retired. Morison and Junot hastened after Napoleon, whom they found on the advance against the grand army of Austria, now concentrating its columns to give or receive the attack.

"Ha, Roldan! you are welcome back!" said Napoleon; "here I place you at my bridle rein—you are always cool, and your courage is equal to your judgment; you may be needed in one of those closing attacks, with which I wind up my battles. Come, Junot, read your notes to me—what said the ambassador, and what was the answer of General Roldan?"

Junot read his notes, omitting nothing; Napoleon laughed, bit his lip, or looked stern.

"Well, this island lord of thine is a bold man, I must needs say; he cannot be one of your chiefs created for his wealth—for a successful speculation in the funds—or because he holds shares in a fruitful canal—or from being a partner in that splendid bubble, called the bank. No, no, this lord has some soul in him. Who is he, General Roldan?"

"He is my father, sir," answered the other, composedly.

"Your father! Light of heaven! of what are you proud islanders composed? And he refused to acknowledge his son—and such a son? I shall never, I fear, be able to work that strange people into my scheme of a general republic. Here, Junot, hurry after Lord Roldan; say Napoleon, the leader of the French, sends him this ring from love of his son, and out of respect to his own dauntlessness." Junot bowed, and departed on the spur.

CHAPTER X.

'Twas in a grove of spreading pines he strayed,
The winds within the quivering branches played,
And dancing trees a mournful music made.

DRYDEN.

WITH the whirlwind on which Napoleon rode, when he swept army after army of the Austrians from Italy, our narrative has little to do; every battle confirmed that great leader's confidence in the infallibility of his mathematical system of tactics, and called forth the high qualities of the subordinate chiefs. Morison became one of his distinguished leaders—he was equally cool and intrepid—his presence of mind never forsook him, and though he had headed some desperate attacks, and fought in the very tempest of battle, he escaped unharmed; his men loved him not more for his skill and courage, than for his determined republican principles, and the gayety of his nature.

In establishing himself thus favourably, we must not conceal that he was aided largely by no less a personage than

honest Davie Gellock, who had, by some sort of natural freemasonry, rendered himself acceptable to all, from the chief who commanded to the humblest that obeyed. Since his repulse by the heiress of Howeboddom, he had given all his matrimonial notions to the wind; he fought, and talked, and sang, and danced, like one possessed with the spirit of three Frenchmen; he was skilful in mimicry, too, and having a natural talent for caricature, exhibited such specimens of his skill, as made him the life of every bivouac; for it is a truth, that the humble love to ridicule the high.

It happened on the advance of Napoleon into the papal territories, that the division commanded by Morison led the van, and halted for the night, in a wood within a day's march of Loretto. The army had executed this movement with unlooked-for rapidity: the light troops extended along the whole line of forest, which separated the barren from the cultivated parts of the district, and occupied the road, which sweeping through the woodland connected Loretto with Invola, where the soldiers of the holy see had just suffered a sharp defeat. No sooner were the troops placed in bivouac, than the moon came forth clear and bright, accompanied by many stars; some of the soldiers pleased themselves with pacing up and down with folded arms, discoursing on the deeds they had done, and the adventures which they hoped yet to achieve; others threw themselves heavily down, and sunk into the slumber which fatigue easily finds; while the greater portion prepared their supper, furbished their arms, or consumed the fore part of the night in conversing about their enemies, and their own leaders.

That the French were so far in advance, seemed to be unknown to the inhabitants, for the village maidens sung loudly as they drove their cows homeward, while the vine dressers echoed them back; and mirth abounded in the land.

Morison had established his tent under the portico of an old temple; fruit trees grew in wild disorder around, while the vine threw its tendrils and hung its clusters over the highest columns, and formed those fine combinations which landscape painters love to display in their compositions. He folded his arms over his bosom, and with his sword by his side, and a brace of pistols in his belt, paced to and fro, revolving in his mind the vicissitudes of his past life, and wondering what was for him in the future. His thoughts wandered to his native glen, and to his mother's bosom; nor did they exclude the Lady Rose, whom he in fancy saw seated on the battlements of Roldan tower, enjoying the fragrance of the evening, and the splendour of the moon on hill and sea. He was not without suspicions that he had done unwisely in scorning the advances, nay, offers, which Lord Roldan had made to his mother; and he was the more inclined

to do this from a feeling which began to grow within him, that under the pretence of freedom, some of the French rulers and leaders were aiming at absolute power, and were likely to achieve it. The burning zeal of the soldiery for liberty and equality had, he observed, begun to cool; the establishment of new republics was indeed talked of, and the fraternal embrace, and the tree of liberty, and the cap to match, were common figures of speech; but acts—acts were what he reasoned upon, and many of these he was unable to reconcile with true republican principles.

In his reverie Morison strayed into the wood, and approached so close to one of the bivouacs, that he could overhear all that the soldiers said. Their talk was about the matters of the campaign, nor did they seem to care who heard them, for they spoke loud and bold. "You talk like a shaven monk," said the first soldier; "a shaven monk, who worships beads, and crosses, and pastoral crooks. The philosophic mind disregards all that trumpery; these are the stock in trade by which cunning men have contrived to cheat and bamboozle the world: when we reach Loretto we shall clean out the whole kit, as sure as my name is Spontoun."

"By Jove!" exclaimed a second soldier, "what strange plunder we shall have. One will burden himself with a whole holy manger—the greater ass he. Another will fill his knapsack with the holy Infant's pap-spoons; a great baby, unless they are of gold; while little Macmanus here—long-tailed Manus, as we call him, will seize the holy saucepan that boiled the first potato, and run away, the thief of the world, with a silver mother of Jesus."

"You are all fools and born idiots!" exclaimed a third. "Know ye not that there are cups of gold set round with diamonds, for our ladye to drink out of; bracelets of the like metal for her ladyship to wear; ay, and slippers which will show you how to pick your steps in the darkest night, from the diamonds in which they are set: some of these shall find their way into little Martin of Tour's knapsack, or I am no true soldier."

"But I hear, lads," said a fourth of those free companions, "that it will be no go after all: the holy people of Loretto have an image of the Virgin, which sighs and sheds tears for the sins of the people; and it is said, she will smite us as the angel did the soldiers of the king of the Assyrians, and when we wake in the morning we shall be all dead corpses."

There was a slight pause, a filling of cups and glasses took place; some of them were drained, and the conversation was renewed. "I confess," said one who had not hitherto spoken, "that I like not the errand on which we are bound; the sword is a sharp reformer, and he that is convinced through fear is a suspicious convert. Had we continued to dethrone kings and erect republics, all would have been well;

but I have not shaken off respect so fully for holy mother church, as to like this inroad upon her. Bourbon, you know, was killed in the sack of Rome."

"Ay, and so might the little corporal too, lads," said a second sharpshooter, "were he to run madly into the line of shot, as Bourbon did; gad, he is more scientific than that! I have seen him, with a pair of compasses and a pencil, lay down a plan, by which a strong place was taken without spilling a drop of blood; he excels all leaders, ancient and modern; he's the man for my money, and should he set up for himself here's a rifle: I say no more."

"You talk of his compasses and his pencil!" exclaimed a third of the same band: "see here, look at that, 'tis Napoleon's invention; with that I heard him say he should be able to conquer the world—cause why? in that little cake, the essence—the strength of a stone of beef is compressed; an ounce weight will make six gallons of soup, and with soup we can face the devil."

"Conquer the world!" said a fourth, "I think we have conquered enough; we have done more in one campaign than any army in modern times, and I wish to return to my cottage and garden in Champagne; I was plucked out of my little paradise by that cursed conscription."

To the no small astonishment of Morison, the voice of Davie Gellock rose from the midst of the group, not in a low tone, soliciting notice, but commanding attention. "We are nae better than a wheen born fools!" exclaimed that worthy; "we put the tricolour in our caps, take a sword in our hands, and peril our best blood—and what for? I ask the question, what for?"

"What for, Monsieur Gellock," said a soldier of Picardy. "Why, for Dame Freedom, to be sure. Divel! do you think we don't know what we are about?"

"Ye imagine ye ken what ye are driving at," answered Davie; "but deil gae down my crapin, cloven foot an' a', if it's the intention of our leaders to let us build up a republican boudoir among the saunts and sinners o' Italy, as we jalousied: na, na. Will ye tell me now, what makes our little corporal collect a' the bonnie madonnas, and saunts, and Christs that are limned on canvass, cast in silver, or cut in stane, and send them aff to France? I ask ye the plain question—now, deil a ane o' ye can tell. Why then, it's just for the purpose of setting up a pope of Rome in Paris, wi' a' his images about him, and compelling us to fall down and worship—and what's waur, pay for absolution for sins, whilk others compelled us to commit. I wad therefore council ye to make hay while the sun shines: to think that a ganging foot should aye be gathering, and no be carried into the clouds wi' grand philosophic notions anent liberty and equality; but remember that we have backs to be clothed and bellies

to be filled, and that as naebody has been fed by ravens since the time of Elijah, we have mair need to trust to oursel'. Let us, therefore, with ready hands and unscrupulous consciences, visit this little Sanctum of Loretto, the images there, I am tauld, are just loaded wi' diamonds, like aye of thae trees wi' figs; and should ony ane o' ye hae constientious gripings, being Catholicks, even turn owre the silver or the gowden commodity to me, I am a Presbyterian and not scrupulous." The auditory burst into loud laughter at Davie's speech.

"He's a droll dog! but we never know whether he is merry or serious."

Morison smiled, and passed onward to where he heard the soldiers of other bivouacs indulging themselves. The trees were lofty; the sward was soft and velvety; he now and then paused, and looked at the stars glimmering through the canopy of boughs overhead, or glanced at the flower out of which his foot crushed a fragrance, new as well as grateful to him; and not unfrequently he contemplated the wild birds of the air that sat side by side on the sheltered branches, and looked down, disturbed at the sight of an intruder on their solitude. All at once, the sound of horses urged to the gallop came on his ear: then there was a halt; voices in fierce altercation were heard; pistol shots fired; and finally, the scream of a lady in distress and terror, made the wood re-echo. Morison hurried forward, and bursting fiercely through the tangling vines upon a bend of the road, the cause of all the outcry became visible. A party of riflemen and cuirassiers had established their bivouac right in the centre of the public way, and were rifling travellers whom ill-fortune and ignorance of the military occupation of the country had thrown into their hands. One of the servants who had resisted was killed; a cuirassier lay dying beside him; some dozen or so were rifling the luggage, while three others were contending for a lady, who, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, her eyes dilated and gleaming with indignation and terror, and a pistol in her hand, stood against a tree, uttering shriek upon shriek.

As a sharpshooter put forth his hand to seize her, a cuirassier struck his arm down, exclaiming, "She is mine, by all the saints of Italy and France to boot! didn't I pull her from her horse?"

"You be flogged!" exclaimed the other, seizing the cuirassier by the belts, "I'll shake ye out of your boots in a moment, by all the gods ancient and modern! the girl's mine, I cut down the fellow who defended her."

"She shall belong to neither," said the third, "you have wives in France and I am single; besides, yon are illiterate asses, and won't understand her tongue—don't you hear that her very shriek has a foreign sound?"

"Then I swear she shall belong to us all," exclaimed the cuirassier. This seemed to satisfy the other two, and they were about to seize her, when Morison burst upon them, saying sternly, "Back, villains," throwing the foremost off with such force that he reeled three paces and fell with a violence that made rising painful. The second bowed and disappeared; but the third, in the passion of the moment, not recognising his chief, plucked a pistol from his belt; it was struck down and the sword at his throat, when the affrighted lady sprung into her deliverer's arms, and murmuring, "Morison, Morison!" fainted in his bosom.

The voice made his heart thrill: he gazed in her face, now as pale as death, and saying, "Rose! Lady Rose!" staggered to the bank, and placing her among the flowers undid her head gear, exclaiming, "Oh for a drop of water!" Water was in a moment brought—in the helmet, too, of the cuirassier lately so fierce and rude; the rough soldier, kneeling on one knee as he presented it, held down his head and said, "Ah! I beg your pardon, lady, and yours too, General Roldan." The soldiers quitted their plunder to gaze on a scene of a softer kind, and, as life and consciousness returned, such a flush of loveliness came with them as moved the hardest.

"She is English, I swear," cried one of the cuirassiers; "the island skins are as white as lilies washed in dew."

"Whether white or brown," said a second, "she has handsome limbs any way: and see how long and round her neck is! Our general's in luck to-night when such a dove has flown into his bosom!"

Rose gazed on Morison, next on the armed men around him, and then on her servants, one of whom lay dead and the other stood sorely wounded. She started up—spoke to them—named them—laid her hands on them—and looking on her fingers reddened with their blood, said, "This is the reward of faithfulness. Oh, Morison, are these fierce soldiers thine?"

Other witnesses were nigh: the bivouac, which was enlightened by Davie's eloquence, heard the report of firearms and the noise of strife, and hastened to the spot; the foremost was the redoubted Davie. His eyes opened, as he afterward declared, as wide as saucers, and his mouth gaped like a mill door, when he beheld the Lady Rose in the arms of Morison, and dead men lying around. "Wha o' ye now," exclaimed Davie, looking fiercely on rifleman and cuirassier, "has had the audacity to meddle with this lamb?"

"I did it," said a sharpshooter, "and what have you to say to it? I yielded to the general, but—" and he stepped towards Davie with a menacing look.

"The devil ye did!" said Davie, and springing upon the soldier locked his arms round him, and, heaving him off the

ground, bestowed a squeeze upon him such as a bear bestows on those who bereave her of her whelps, and then flinging him violently down, bade him gather himself up at his leisure. He lay without motion, while Davie triumphantly exclaimed, "We are forbid to use lead or steel in our quarrels, sae there's nae martial law infringed, but an I had used baith he could nae had the starch ta'en better out of him."

The clatter of the hoofs of hurrying horse was heard, and in a moment Napoleon, with Murat and Lannes, appeared on the scene. "Ha, Roldan! what is this? Ah, a lady! I understand—and a fair one—an islander too?"

Rose stepped forward, and looking composedly at Napoleon said, "Yes, I am an islander: a traveller too, and of a sex with whom the brave wage no war: but these men attacked me on this spot, slew one of my servants, and would have been rude to myself but for the coming of General Roldan."

Napoleon looked on the lady and on Morison, then turning to Murat said, "Joachim, they are as like each other as twin stars."

"I never beheld a face, save one, so beautiful," replied Murat; "how Lannes gazes on her! had he been one of the spoilers, Roldan would have had a task equal to storming a town to have regained her."

Morison meanwhile had been forming his own resolution. "Here, Davie," he said, "and thou too, my friend," laying his hand on the shoulder of the cuirassier, from whose helmet the water still dropped, "take each of you six men in whom you can trust; follow me to my tent, and there form a guard for this lady's protection, and answer with your hearts' blood for her safety. General, when that is done I attend on you."

Napoleon bowed to Morison and lower to Lady Rose, as they walked towards the tent. "I like this," said the chief; "my friend Roldan's quite a hero—a hero for the muse of Ossian. These tender incidents soften the iron aspect of war; they impart, too, a chivalrous daring to a man of an imaginative temperament; I shall bid Roldan thunder in the van, or rush on with the reserve, in the very next battle. But, Lannes, my friend! you heed me not?"

"Why, I am thinking," said Lannes, "what a lucky fellow Roldan is; he began in romance, and something romantic still follows him; a sorceress in Hispaniola told him he would become great, and great he becomes accordingly. I wish some one would consult the stars for me, and show me a career as bright."

"I have done it," said Napoleon, his brow darkening slightly as he spoke.

"You, general?" exclaimed the other—"can you read the planets?"

"I can guess," answered Napoleon; "I have a star—all men of mark have stars—and you, Lannes, have one—I see it now—yonder it is beside my own! how brightly they blaze and move brilliantly together through the sky. But what do I behold! one is suddenly extinguished, while the other continues its course undimmed."

"Well, be it so," exclaimed Lannes: "let my course, like yon shooting star, be bright to the last; but"—and he looked round ere he said, in a low earnest voice—"you will be lord of Europe first."

Napoleon seized him by the ear, gave it a gentle pinch, and answered, "What words are these, Citizen Lannes?—you know not the harm they might do you."

"The day is gone for that," replied the other, cheerfully; "it is not likely that one of Napoleon's followers will allow Dame Guillotine to take her will of his neck; her grips are not so pleasant as were the grips of yon island girl round the neck of Roldan—I never saw him look confused before."

"And likely may never see him so again," said Napoleon; "I love Roldan—his courage is great, his presence of mind equal to my own, and the quickness of his conceptions is surpassed by the rapidity of his execution—yet, he is a riddle: there is something mystical and undefined about him; he already begins to look coldly on our career; his head is filled with the chimeras of liberty and equality, and he expects to see thrones pulled down, and republics reared after every victory. And yet mark the inconsistency of the man; I but hinted to him the other day of the probability of an army being despatched into his own little isle of pedlars: he coloured up; a light came into his eye, such as I have witnessed when he was doing some desperate deed; he looked on me and said,

"Oh never but by British hands
Shall British wrongs be righted."

A noble sentiment, yet a strange one for him to utter, who is the child and the champion of universal liberty and equality."

"Does your maj—I beg your pardon," exclaimed Murat, "talking of thrones has confused my brain—do you march on Loretto and Rome to-morrow, general?"

"Yes, Prince Murat," replied Napoleon, laughing. "Do you desire to be created a cardinal? I shall have something in my power, and will willingly oblige thee, Joachim, for who can forget thy impetuous valour—thy whirlwind charges?"

"My taste does not lean churchward," said the other, laughing; "I am happier in the vortex of battle, when sword strikes fire on sword, and plume nods madly on plume, than on the marble floor of a palace, or on the bloomy mead when

maidens are merry, and music of birds and instruments fills all the air."

Meanwhile Morison, aiding with his hand the hesitating steps of Lady Rose, conducted her to his tent, and seated her amid an armful of flowers, which his followers had gathered to perfume the place. Davie brought in the travelling gear—he stood first on the right foot, then on the left—fidgeted, rubbed his flinty palms till they almost produced fire, and at last burst into a loud chuckling laugh. "What ails ye, David?" inquired Morison; "there's something wrong when ye laugh."

"Wrang!" exclaimed his follower, "there's naught wrang; all is right; but this is the queerest of all odd-come-short-lies. Catch a hizzie, and make her a handmaid: that coves a'!"—David's exclamations were interrupted by a cuirassier and a rifleman entering the tent, holding between them a handsome girl, some sixteen years old or so. Her large black eyes were wet with tears, her hair dishevelled, her dress, simple as it was, disordered, and she gazed as though she dreaded that in every one she beheld an executioner.

The two soldiers looked to one another, glanced at Lady Rose and Morison, and each seemed desirous of saying something. "Ambrose, art thou struck dumb, man?" said the rifleman; "where is the speech you promised to make to the lady? there she sits, like a white dove whose plumage some raven has ruffled: speak, man, or shut your mouth for ever."

"Lady," said the cuirassier, thus admonished, "all my fine words flew away when I came to the tent door. My comrade and I felt so heartily ashamed for our rudeness, that we resolved to atone for it somehow: so thinking that damsels such as your loveliness would like don't abound in the camp, we e'en set out on a forage, and had the luck to catch this little black-eyed cottager; she was singing like any nightingale, but her song sank into a scream when we went right bolt on her, and carried her off. Here she is, lady, and should she not suit, we'll e'en catch another hand-maiden for you. Oh, that we should ever have presumed to touch the lady whom our general loves." So saying, they thrust the maiden forward. She was not at all unwilling to escape from such handling, but smiled as she went up to the seat of Lady Rose, folding her hands over her bosom, and bowing her head, as if approving of the strange transfer which had been made.

No sooner were the two soldiers gone, than Rose assured the young Italian that no wrong should be done to her, and that General Roldan would see that she was placed safe again under the roof of her friends. This composed her at once; she trimmed her ruffled dress, set her loosened ringlets in order, and after two or three turns about the tent,

began to let her tongue slip into one of her country's delightful melodies, though a sob or two saddened the sound. "Weel, thae French are queer creatures," said Davie as he went out, and returned again to the tent; "there's courtesy in cutting o' throats as weel as in kissing; they hae a' sic a turn for the polite, and how gleg as they are at it too! they'll do't in half the time an Englishman's thinking on't. Wha wad hae thought of gripping a servant quean out o' compliment to ane their general likes? Here's mair o' the same sort o' courtesy." As he muttered this, he placed a basket full of fruit at the feet of the young lady, with wine and all such delicacies as the land afforded, and then said, "Hard blows were given and received in the market where these grapes were found; pistol shots and sword clash were rife when that wine was got from the cellar. Ye would think the spirit of love had seized on our whole division; for away they flew east and west to collect delicacies for your supper. Od! Lady Rose, if you asked for ane o' yon crimson-lined clouds for a couch, and twa o' yon brilliant stars for candles, they wad try and get them for ye."

Davie stood sentinel at the tent door; the soldiers had retired to their different watches, and no one was present save the Italian girl, when Morison and Rose ate fruit, tasted wine, and entered into conversation.

"This, Lady Rose, is but a rude way of showing respect," said Morison; "but we are on our march from one battlefield to another, and simplicity is, with us, the most attainable of all the graces."

She looked on Morison, and answered: "This rude respect shows the regard the soldiers have for their general; their compliments are poetic, and as they come from the heart, they are welcome. I was prepared for this, from all I have seen, and all I have heard."

"But by what accident, lady, did you travel on a road, rendered dangerous by the occupation of a conquering army; and—but I should have asked that first, how could you think of coming into Italy in times so changeful and perilous as these?"

"I accompanied Lord Roldan to Rome, where he had business of a private nature to transact with his holiness; and then I came with him when he bore a message to your haughty commander, which was frustrated by the pride and obstinacy of one whom they call Napoleon's right hand."

"No, lady," replied Morison, "the pride was not on my part; but had our guardian angel's intercourse with man depended on it, I had not acted otherwise." He folded his arms as he said this, and looked the sentiment he uttered.

"Morison," said Rose, "I shall not thank you for having saved me from dishonour, because I know you would have wrought the same deliverance for any other. But, oh! if you

would render that deliverance more pleasing, relax, I pray you, somewhat of that stern creed, of which the sentiment just uttered is a dark one. Your blood seems of fire; your wrongs have added a delirium to your thoughts; Lord Roldan is not wilder and madder in his notions of blood and lineage, than you are in your scorn of all that the world has, till within this week I may say, revered."

"I know it," answered he, "I acknowledge it; it is my pride; it is what I live for; it is what I may die for: but I shall seek it unto death. It was wrongs—wrongs, lady, done to her whom I all but idolize; wrongs, too, offered to myself—repeatedly offered—which stung my heart, and opened my eyes, and caused me to see that the evil spirit of hereditary rank was the idol to whom mother and son were sacrificed. That idol shall be cast down, as sure as yon moon belongs to heaven—as sure as that wine was expressed from the grape, and as sure as my right foot touches the earth!" he stamped as he said this—"or Morison Roldan shall perish in the attempt."

"Morison," said Rose, laying her hand on his, "make no rash vows—swear not, I entreat you, in this mistempered mood; the world is in a changeable temper—your new republic may be cast down by the very hands which reared it. You are moving in the midst of armed men, and hear but their war cries, and are not aware that the chief who leads you is employing the spirit and the swords of the republicans to achieve an empire for himself."

Morison paced up and down his tent, his looks were troubled, and something seemed to press on his mind. "I have dreaded this," he said to himself; "a change has indeed come over the spirit of this conquering army; the soldiers attach themselves to individual commanders; it is now no longer 'Live the Republic!' but 'Live Napoleon!' Nay, in their very songs, the soldiers talk of pulling the attorneys out by the neck, and placing their leader, the Child of Destiny, as he calls himself, in their stead. All the generals save Bernadotte hold the same language—the republic depends on the breath of the army of Italy, and on the stamp of the boot heel of Napoleon."

Rose saw what was passing in his mind: "I was one of those," she said, "who rejoiced when you were torn by force from your country, because I had such an opinion of your mind and spirit, that I believed great good would come out of what you deemed insufferable evil—nay, look not so suspiciously on me; your life was cared for, and men were with you, whom the callous ruffian, employed to kidnap you, would have contended with in vain. But, alas! all was frustrated by the dread doings which took place in Hispaniola; you were thrown into the vortex of a revolution, which has swallowed up the worth and the virtue of France; the tide

is now flowing east, west, north, and south, like a lava inundation, to burn up other countries. That you use your power worthily, I am prepared to hear; but is it meet, and is it not tyrannous to force other nations, at the edge of the sword, to adopt maxims, the worth of which remains to be proven, and constitutions which, even in France, change like the fashion of men's clothes?"

Morison smiled at her energy, and answered, "I had no choice, I was flung into this raging ocean of change, and had to swim if I desired to live. Behold me a leader; had I remained in my own land, what would the bastard boy have been? the lobster-coated lackey to some upstart peer, or a barefooted watcher of sheep on the hills, with a peeled stick and a plaid. No, no, lady, the good, notwithstanding the evil, has been great, which the revolution has wrought; it has taught kings that thrones are not safe which are not supported by the people; it has told a hundred millions of men, by how few they have allowed themselves to be enslaved; and it has proved, that when princes become enemies, and nobles leave the land, enough of worth, and courage, and genius can be found in shieling and cottage, to save an empire and increase its glory."

"All this I may allow to be true," answered Rose; "but, Morison, as we sailed thither, we heard of rumours of camps established, and navies equipping for the invasion of England. Are we to be honoured with the Jacobinic embrace in the vale of Glengarnock, and have Dominie Milligan's school kept by honest Ambrose, who has invented a new way to find handmaids?"

"I am glad to see that the rude interruption experienced in your journey has not deprived you of your inclination for railery. Now, lady, I bestow this tent on you and your little handmaid; you will find couches on which repose is sometimes found—my duty calls me elsewhere, yet the tent will have its watchers. Good-night, and may your slumbers be sweet!"

It was now nigh midnight, all was still around, and save the snort of a bridled steed, or the greeting of the sentinels, naught indicated that breathing thing was there, much less that ten thousand armed men lay ready at a signal to start into energy and action. As Morison paced to and fro before and sometimes behind his tent, musing on her whom the tent contained, and on his own singular destiny, a low dull creeping sound came at times from a distance to his ear; it was not the wind among remote trees; neither was it the rushing of waters; but it seemed the hum of a multitude of marching men. "D'ye hear that?" said Davie, in a scarce audible voice, to Morison. "It's the sough of men and horse: and it comes out o' the airt, wherein no half an hour since three lights, one white, one blue, and one red, were thrown

up halfway to heaven, and these were followed by twenty pale ones—there's some devilry in the wind, I'll warrant."

"Ay," said Morison, "it is the enemy—the three lights indicate the French colours, and the twenty, the thousands which they imagine compose our advance—they think to surprise us—they will find us prepared."

As he said this, he ascended, or rather climbed to the top of the ancient temple where his tent was pitched, and standing on the summit, gazed wistfully over the line of forest and the distant valley. The air was calm and clear; naught was to be seen; but on leaping from one of the broken columns to the ground, he said, "David, they are close upon us; the mist of the valley and the skirts of the forest cover, as with a mantle, their line of march—there are many horse, and I heard the slow grinding of the artillery wheels—they come, confiding in their numbers, into the very lap of our position; we will welcome them with fire and steel." He whispered a few words to his follower, who nodded intelligence, and disappearing among the trees aroused his men. There was saddling and mounting in haste; there were advancements into line, while the artillery, already in position, concealed by the growing wood, and by fences of cut boughs, lay ready to pour forth a tempest of iron. Morison seemed to be everywhere present. "Stand fast, my lads," he said, as he passed along the front, which lay like a crescent with its horn towards the enemy: "stand fast, and they are all ours."

His men answered with smiles, and with a slight flourish of sword and musket, and one of the veterans said, "My comrade and I have a request to make of General Roldan: keep out of the line of shot—you have told us what to do, and the lads of Lodi will do it."

Nor was Davie idle; he aroused his companions; a circle of sand bags and sacks of corn were heaped high around the tent where Rose lay, in undisturbed slumber: "This will keep her from the accident of a stray ball," muttered Davie, "and we are strong enough to beat off a hasty attack."

Something of approaching danger seems to have been presented to her in a dream; for she moved, started half from her couch, and then murmuring "Morison," sunk again in slumber.

CHAPTER XI.

Go fetch to me a pint of wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink, before I gang,
A service to my bonnie lassie.

BURNS.

THE slumber in which we left the Lady Rose was of short duration, though all the sounds and smells around her wooed to repose. The steps of the soldiers on the forest sward were scarce audible; the murmur of the breeze among the boughs, laden with fragrance and with fruit, was lulling and grateful; the small grasshopper-like chirrup of the field mouse, as it nibbled the new-fallen fruit, was pleasant to an ear fastidious in sounds; and all nature seemed anxious to indulge beauty with the repose she so much required.

The sudden burst of fifty pieces of artillery, the clang of many trumpets, the warning summons of innumerable drums, and that thrilling cry which two armies set up when they make the onset, awoke her at once, and awoke her too in terror, which she sought in vain to conceal. "Where am I!" she cried; "and where's Morison?"

"Deed, my lady," said the comforter Davie, "ye are just as safe as if ye were in Roldan tower. Deil a ball was ever cast can come through these ramparts; and where is Morison, said ye? just where I should like to be; looking down the leviathan thrapple of that great beast, war, and ruling ten thousand men, who will move as he moves, and do as he does."

Rose hastily adjusted her dress, and with her little hand-maiden, whom the rough hand of war had lately bestowed on her, stood ready to move, should it be necessary.

"She's a glorious creature!" said one of the riflemen, looking at her over the rude rampart which fenced her in; "and while there's a ball in my piece, and blood in my veins, she shall be safe."

Danger for the present appeared to be distant. Morison had received the first rush of the enemy with equal resolution and bravery; and lapping their flanks with fire, and charging their front with foot and horse, repulsed them with great loss, and maintained his position, which was strong and seemed so; for the forest prevented the assailants from perceiving either the exact posture or number of their enemies.

"We are quit of them for this time, Roldan," said Murat,

as they returned to their position, restoring their bloody swords to their sheaths.

"They will return presently," replied the other; "they see we refrain from pursuing them, and will calculate we are weak; and here they come!" His eyes, as he spoke, sparkled with that intense light which the lion's eye emits as he leaps on the hunters.

The leaders of the enemy concluded that at most two divisions of the French impeded their way, and bringing forward more horse, with all their cannon, and throwing out clouds of skirmishers on front and flank, advanced once more to the combat.

"What makes you hesitate?" exclaimed a priest. "Your feet are on your native soil; the bones of your fathers lie around you; your wives, your mistresses, your mothers, and your children, are praying for your success, and will ye dare, in such a cause, to dread the aspect of death? Forward!" and the intrepid monk ran barefooted before them, and, crucifix in hand, died in the act of breaking through the French line.

"Why halt, my people?" exclaimed a second monk, bearing a banner in his hand. "Do you doubt the aid of the saints? have ye not faith in the miraculous image of our Ladye? I tell ye lead shall fly harmless over you, and steel shall smite you in vain; for your cause is that of the church, and ye war with that philosophic heresy, which is the second born of Satan, as sin was the first." Thus urged, the squadrons advanced to the charge, and a fierce contest ensued, in which all the skill and presence of mind which marked the commander were required to make good the French position.

Meanwhile, some of those who would rather conquer by stratagem than seek success where the peril of blood is great, penetrated along the French flanks, and endeavoured to gain the rear of their position. Two hundred or so of those cautious warriors came towards the tent where Rose sat, and though several of them fell in the advance, the remainder reached the rampart which enclosed her, and conjecturing that it contained the military chest, summoned more of their comrades, and attacked the guard, who amounted to about fifty men. The assailants were encouraged in this by the sound of battle, which drew nearer and nearer; balls came crashing through the forest, strewing the ground with leaves and boughs. It seemed that the French were retreating, and that the old temple and tent would likely become the scene of the last struggle. Some such thought crossed the mind of Davie; he threw down part of the rampart, and said, "Lady—Lady Rose, we maun retire; Morison wants us. Besides, I dread that thae papist deevils will get the better o' us if we bide ony longer."

As he spoke, the attack which Davie dreaded commenced. Now the Lady Rose had all the courage which belonged to her name. In this moment of danger she neither wrung her hands, tore her hair, beat her bosom, nor yelled dolorously. She snatched up Morison's pistols, and bursting from assailants, joined the guard, and called on them to stand. Her youth, her beauty, the melody of her voice, and the brightness of her eyes, which seemed to emit liquid fire, struck some of the foremost with awe; nor were they willing to level their rifles at her, lest they should offend a saint, for of this world they scarcely deemed her. "Stuff, nonsense, gammon!" cried one into whose ear his comrade whispered his fears. "Our Ladye forgive you! d'ye think Saint Beatrice would forget herself, and take part with the neretics? This will show you what stuff she is made of;" but as he levelled his rifle a ball struck him on his forehead, and stretched him lifeless. "I was right," muttered his comrade, and began to retire, exclaiming, "We are warring against Heaven, my countrymen!"

But, notwithstanding the flight of the superstitious, and the bravery of the guard of the young lady, she was in peril, when the rush of horses' feet were heard, boughs crashed, a stern voice cried "Advance!" and Napoleon himself, at the head of his guards, appeared upon the scene. He leaped from his horse, took Rose by the hand, and said, "Thou island heroine, thou art fit to be empress of the earth—fit to be companion to my Josephine, who has a soul lofty and great as thine own." All the courage which danger had called up vanished now, and the woman with her feelings returned; she dropped her pistols—both had been, and not idly, discharged; she passed her hand over her disordered tresses, and stood—and scarcely stood, so much was she oppressed by the presence of that dread chief whom she had already learned to call the Child of Destiny. "lady," he said, with a voice like music, and one of those irresistible smiles which could win the way to the roughest heart—"Lady, your introduction to Napoleon has been where ceremony could not be considered; but you are safe; nay, you owe it to yourself. Roldan is victor, and here he comes to say so."

The tide of war, after a fierce overflow, had been rolled back; and Morison, his face died with gunpowder, and his dress soiled with the contest—for he had been where strife was hot—came on his reeking horse, and leaping at once to the ground, removed his helmet, and bowing to Rose, said, "Thank Heaven, lady, you are safe!" She looked wistfully on him: Napoleon whispered in her ear, "He is as beautiful as a youthful Mars: I shall have a statue of him there as he stands, from the chisel of my friend Canova."

And of thee too, lady; thou art a scarcely more beautiful Roldan." Rose blushed at the greatness of these compliments, and seemed anxious to retire.

"Alas!" said Morison, who interpreted her looks, "what would I give, dearest Rose, to see thee where no harm could reach. Napoleon, you can help me; the road is open to Rome, and who would dare to disobey an order from your right hand?"

"Why few, I believe, in Italy," answered the chief. "But stay; day is already brightening; nay, the edge of the sun is above the ocean—the birds too are abroad in the air, as well as the bees, and we shall have sunshine to show us where our enemies lie, and light us in our deliberations." These words were not well uttered when the whole air rung with cheers and shouts, and still the acclamations increased. "See what all this is about, Murat," said Napoleon. "Has the directory recalled us?" he continued with a sneer. "They have been less forward with their orders since we refused to divide the army with Kellerman. Ha! are the days of knight-errantry returned? Here are gentle warriors. I should know that form!" It was a vision which called forth these latter words—a vision of beauty. Two young and handsome maidens came jewelled from the bosom to the knee; their locks beautifully braided into small lines and wound gracefully about the head. The lady who succeeded these, accompanied by a score of handsome youths completely armed, was of a riper and more dignified beauty. Neither had she called in the aid of jewels to adorn her, but trusting to the elegance of her form, to the sweet yet commanding dignity of her Junolike looks, rode on in conscious superiority towards the young chief of the French army, the Child of Destiny himself.

Burnished helmet and plumed hat left their wearers' heads as she advanced. Napoleon coloured like a bridegroom on his way to the altar; and stepping forward, exclaimed, "Welcome, my Josephine! this is a fit place to receive you—it is the field of victory."

"On what other field could you have received me, my lord?" said the future empress. "On every hill, in every vale, and on the banks of every stream where Josephine has passed since she entered Italy, she traced the victorious footsteps of her Napoleon. Ha! General Roldan—my young, my fervent friend—I am glad to see you at my hero's right hand, and sharing with him the glory of victory."

"If I had not heard of Roldan's courage and genius through my Josephine," said Napoleon, bowing to both, "I should have had the merit of remarking them myself; for, since we gained Monte-Notte, not a day has passed that he has not displayed the readiness of his invention and the en-

ergy of his mind. But I have a duty to do : I wish I were poet enough to do it gracefully."

As Napoleon said this he took the Lady Rose by the hand, and leading her forward, said, "My Josephine discovered a hero : I have discovered a heroine. I present her to you. We sometimes see shapes in smoke and faces in clouds, do you see no one's soul looking through these eyes ?"

Josephine took Rose in her arms, saluted her, and said, "Yes, I see a more gentle, a more angelic Roldan."

"Gentle !" exclaimed Napoleon, "I wish you had but seen her an hour ago. A squadron of the enemy came rather close ; her guard, outnumbered, began to retreat : not so my heroine : with a pistol in her hand, these dove's eyes emitting lightning, and stamping like Mars himself, she cried 'Come on !' I heard her—I saw her. Ah ! were it not that Roldan and Lannes would do nothing but gaze on you in battle, and forget that they are heroes, I would bestow a division on you, Lady Rose."

"What, and art thou a Rose too, as well as Josephine ! But thou art a British rose, fair as a lily, and she is a darker flower, and shows on her cheek the salute of the sun of her own glowing clime. Thou art my sister. I mark thee for my own."

Morison advanced. "Lady," he said to Josephine, "you have eased my heart—and I should have said so sooner, but these battle adventures of ours unfit us to appear in such a presence. Welcome to Italy. Ah ! oftentimes have I seen our great chief look back to sunny France and sigh—he will look forward now."

At this moment the intrepid Lannes, who, carried away by his impetuous valour, had urged the pursuit of the enemy, came "stewed in haste"—his horse in a foam, and himself wearing from helmet to spur, the tokens of a heady strife. "I bear in my left hand peace," he said to Napoleon, "and I bear in my right hand war ; should you choose the former, the church will take you to her ample bosom, forgive you all your error, call a saint by your name, and grant absolution to your followers. Should you choose war, she bids me say that she will use her spiritual artillery as well as the carnal sword, and bolt and bar the gates of heaven against you, and deliver you and your army—horse and foot—over to Satan. I think these were all the words ; the emperor and the pope have sent commissioners to know your pleasure. The eagle Napoleon sits with the dove Italy in his claw, and the raven and the crow come to croak him out of his meal."

"Bravo ! Lannes, you grow poetical," said Napoleon.

"You will find my words true, notwithstanding," said the rough soldier ; "but if you follow my council—have I liberty to give it ?"

"Out with it, man," answered Napoleon, "out with it, were it but to help us to a laugh."

"Why then it is this: defy the emperor, laugh at the pope, allow us to crown you and Josephine king and queen of Italy, and depend on the army for keeping your throne against the world."

"You are facetious to-day, Lannes," said Napoleon, with something between a rebuke and a smile on his countenance; "go look to your division—you have acquired a right to a step in command by your bravery. I almost wish I were a prince, that I might bestow half my kingdom on my gallant followers."

The armistice thus oddly intimated was proclaimed at midday: the army fell back, conducted by Murat and Lannes, accompanied by Josephine and her ladies; Napoleon himself, with Morison and Massena: men whose heads were required in political arrangement lingered behind, and followed with the rear division. In pursuing their way, through one of the many groves of that fine land, two of Josephine's pages came, and in the name of their mistress, invited the chief and his comrades to an entertainment—a table in the wilderness.

"What can this be?" said Napoleon to Morison: "some poetic repast, I suppose—some elegant whim of my Josephine. I hope our fair islander will aid in rendering it agreeable." They entered a stately avenue of trees, which conducted them to one of those majestic temples reared by the Romans, whose dreams in all things were of eternity. Time, superstition, and barbarians rude and civilized had warred upon its solid masonry in vain; the sublime portico towered above all the surrounding forest, while a statue, austere, majestic, and colossal, wearing an immortal sentiment amid ruin, still occupied its pedestal in the centre. All this was, at the moment we speak of, concealed; but as Napoleon approached, a veil which screened it, as a mist hides the mountain side, was withdrawn, and displayed a sight which took him by surprise.

The steps up to the temple were strewn with flowers; garlands of roses hung halfway to the ground from the shattered pediment, while the columns were wreathed with laurel from capital to base. On the summit waved flags taken from the Austrians and Sardinians; and within the portico were placed two splendid seats with the eagle standards on each side, and that no one might mistake the meaning, on one was written Napoleon, on the other Josephine. Tables covered with fruits, and fragrant with wine, extended from these places of honour, with seats for some of the chiefs of the army, with the addition of two veterans, marked out for promotion: one of whom had saved the life of Napoleon, and the other had planned the storming of a difficult redoubt, and executed it with a bravery, which called forth the applause of friend and foe. The Lady Rose sat at the knee of

Josephine, and Morison, Lannes, Murat, and Massena were nigh Napoleon. Multitudes of common soldiers gathered round, and with arms in their hands applauded the scene, shouting the names of their favourite leaders, among whom that of Roldan was remembered.

While all was joy and gayety, a soldier from the top of the temple, unseen himself, lowered down a chaplet of laurel by an invisible thread, and so well was it managed, that it touched the head of Napoleon before he perceived it. This was received with loud shouts: but when an imperial crown of laurel was lowered by the same hand, many stern voices were heard in disapprobation, and the chief with a smile placed it on one of the eagles.

"Liberty and equality!" shouted a hundred voices, "Vive la République!"

"Ay, ay," said Napoleon, "these are fine words, and—once carried a meaning."

"Silence!" exclaimed Lannes, with a voice which might have been heard amid the discharge of a hundred pieces of artillery. "Silence, soldiers! you cry liberty and equality! but I cry a hot war and rapid promotion. You shout, long live the republic! I shout, perish all who hinder the sword from holding rule in the earth—live the army of Italy!" He would have said more, but was interrupted by shouts, accompanied by the waving of pennants, swords, and plumes; and also by the coming of two ambassadors, one from the emperor, and the other from the pope, whose private orders were to obtain peace at any sacrifice.

Napoleon smiled as they approached, and said to Massena, "I was lately told by an Austrian officer—one of the minute-step school—that I gained my battles contrary to all rules. I shall receive these men in the spirit in which I fight—let them advance. Now, sirs, what say you; explain your errand."

The Austrian looked at the strange scene before him, then fixing his eyes on Napoleon, said, "The emperor honours you as a great soldier; he would gladly be at peace with France, and—" he continued in a low voice, "as republics are notoriously unkind to those who merit most, he bids me say that the rank of prince of the empire is too low for your merit, but he has nothing higher to offer."

"Sir Austrian," said Napoleon, sternly, "my reply is, that I would rather be the humblest citizen of a free republic, than the head of a despotic empire; you are answered. Now, Sir Priest, what may your mission be?"

"If I spoke for myself," said the monk, "I should say, the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; that we are his servants, and thou and thy men our vassals, and that thy foul goddess of liberty should be worshipped in St. Peter's instead of the Lord of Hosts, before that I became a suppliant

to such a man as Napoleon Bonaparte and his libertine army."

"Ha! Sir Monk," said Lannes, "another word and thou art in purgatory. Dost think that these columns are cloisters and the conquering Napoleon a country wench come to confess her folly?"

"Peace, Lannes," said Napoleon, "peace! But what have you to say for him of Rome—the prince and priest?"

"From my prince and priest, as thou art pleased to call his holiness, the infallible head of God's visible church, I have milder words; for I serve a meek old man, who loves devotion, and shudders at strife, and would rather surrender some of the patrimony of the church, and some of its wealth, than bring sorrow upon his people, or cause the effusion of blood."

It seemed fated that Josephine should have other guests than those she had invited. Trumpets sounded at a distance: the soldiers ran on all sides to see who the new comers might be; and Bernadotte and Murat, at a signal from their chief, advanced at the head of a band of chosen soldiers to welcome, to watch, or to seize the intruders. It was two deputies commissioned by the directory to bear its commands to the citizen general and his followers, and as they were not fully acquainted with the ascendancy which the genius of Napoleon had acquired over the army, they comported themselves with a haughtiness which they wished to be felt. "Spirit of equality! what do I see?" said the first deputy. "I approach not a simple leader of the citizens of the august republic, but a king throned among his vassals."

"Say on," said Napoleon, "and spare not."

"And what do I see," said the second deputy, "but a crown prepared for the head of the citizen general. Brother, let us do our duty. I grieve for this valiant soldier. How sad will the dames of Paris be when he bares his neck to the guillotine!"

The impetuous Lannes burst out: "Half the shoulders in France shall want heads, and the women of Paris wade ankle deep in the blood of men before Napoleon's neck be bared for the guillotine! Nor do they deserve to wear theirs for a moment who talk of such things. Ay, frown, Napoleon, and frown too, deputies of the directory, but I know the feelings of the army. By the sun of heaven! were I to report your words to these seventy thousand men, they would feed the ravens with you first—then march for Paris—and—" Morison gave the vehement soldier a violent pinch which caused him to turn roughly about.

Napoleon, in a voice like music, soft, gentle, and pleasing, thus addressed and smoothed down the deputies:

"Citizens, you win the public ear and gratify the nation by your sense and your eloquence; by your winning manner and your courtesy; we win the public favour by the rapidity

of our marches and the sharpness of our blows; we must make allowance for one another; a soldier who, like the valiant Lannes there, has made his name the terror of Italy; whose sword hung like a burning comet over their camps and cities, portending destruction; he has neglected to file his tongue and to pick his words: you will have the goodness, therefore, to excuse his hasty expressions. As for the seats which Josephine and her husband now occupy, they come from the love of our soldiers to one who has never led them but to victory: nothing was meant injurious to the majesty of the people." The deputies were soothed and satisfied.

While this was passing, Josephine whispered the lady Rose, "How noble Roldan looks! you must be proud of your friend; he is in the way to fame and glory."

"Friend!" said Rose, "alas! he refuses to be the friend of my house; he wishes to stand alone; and scorning the alliance of a noble name, desires to be known only as his own maker."

"Ah, Rose, my love, cannot two bright eyes—cannot a sweet tongue—cannot good sense and great loveliness, persuade your cousin to relax in his rigid notions?"

"Cousin, lady?" answered Rose, colouring. "A mystery, which naught, I fear, can now explain, hangs over my birth: if I am allowed to call myself his sister, it is honour enough for me—ay, or for any one."

"Ah, I see—I understand," said Josephine; "but surely it was not revealed to me in a dream that you are the child of the younger, and not of the elder brother."

Twilight came, and Morison, stunned with the rumours and with the conferences of the day, walked out of the camp, and entered a small and very beautiful valley, to muse on his situation, and retire into his own thoughts. It was a place famed in modern as well as in ancient story: statues of gods, and fauns, and satyrs, and nymphs, had given place to cypresses, cells for anchorets, and figures of men whipped and tormented by fiends, male and female. Morison felt an awe steal over him; he thought of the haunted glens of his native Scotland; of the forms with which fear peopled them, and was looking suspiciously into a darksome nook, and shaping the sounds which he heard into words, and the shadows into figures, when a hand was laid on his arm—he started and made a motion towards his sword.

"It is your general," said Napoleon. Morison looked on him—in his face melancholy and sternness were mingled. "Continue your walk, Roldan," he said, taking his arm—"this is enchanted ground: nay, smile not; superstitious belief is common to all nations, nor have the classic regions of Italy escaped from it more than the wild rough glens of Caledonia."

They walked a few paces, till they reached a broken column:—"Here," continued Napoleon, "the temple of the sibyls stood; and over this vale were scattered the leaves of the book of fate. But a God-child was born, and fate spoke no more in verse; the tongue which it used—but, Roldan, you mark me not."

"I do, I do," said Morison, eagerly, "your legend would create a sense of hearing in a stone."

"Well, the fame which belonged to this place of old has not forsaken it: when I quitted the camp, and walked into this vale alone, I could see in the looks of my soldiers that they credit the general rumour, how I take my orders for battle from a supernatural source. Have you not heard of Orthon, the brown spirit, who visits my couch at night, visible to myself alone, and points with his long lean fingers the way to success and victory?"

"I have heard of the fiction," answered Morison; "some of the soldiers believe it."

"Ha! then in this spiritual counsellor thou hast thyself no trust? Are there no such goblins in Scottish belief?"

"They were believed in once, but knowledge has withdrawn the veil with which ignorance rendered ordinary things dark and terrible. Surely the wise, the philosophic Napoleon, cannot believe that he has intercourse with a goblin!"

Napoleon paused in his walk, and grasping Morison by the arm, said, "Tell Murat and Lannes, ay, or Junot, that you reckon the familiar spirit which visits Napoleon a dream, and be challenged for your pains. But since you believe not in

'Airy shapes which syllable men's names,'

what sayest thou to the language of the heavens? Dost thou observe yonder star? See how large, and round, and luminous it is! it is alone, and seems to set the mountain summit on fire: it is the Napoleon star."

"You mean," said Morison, "that men call it after you: not that it has made its appearance because of your birth, to indicate your fortunes."

"I see," said Napoleon, "that thou art an unbeliever in all things. Roldan, listen to me. In the hour in which I was born, even while my mother lay in the birth-time pang, yonder bright star rose for the first time in the west, and with its radiance lightened and alarmed the whole isle. Even before I gave indications of the spirit which is in me, the old people of Corsica pointed it out to me, and said: 'Behold thy star, Napoleon, it is laden with glory.' When fortune is propitious, its light is almost insufferable, but when I am in sickness or in peril, it grows wan. Dost thou not remember when crossing at midnight the foaming Tag-

liamento, the waters mastered me, and but for thee I had been lost; I saw my star—how pale and how waning it looked."

Morison could not for his soul forbear smiling. Napoleon, who perhaps did not look for any expression of his faith in the goblin counsellor, seemed to have expected full credence for his star, and was offended at the unbelieving look with which it was received.

"Ha! my friend," he exclaimed, "beware how you scorn spiritual intelligences; why, now, I could prove to you the existence of my demon counsellor at once—shall I! dare you desire such revelation?"

"Proof is exactly what is desirable," replied Morison, "and belief cannot live in my bosom without it."

"Well then, Roldan, the first tells me that the Lady Rose is your cousin, not your sister, as many say and some believe—that you are in love without knowing it, and that her words and looks are rendering you cold and lukewarm in the great cause of liberty and equality."

"So much for the demon," answered Morison with a momentary flush of face; "of what complexion is the intelligence of your star. Oh, Napoleon! well did the poet exclaim,

'What an impostor genius is!'"

"Why, then, my star," said Napoleon, "in the midst of its brilliant course, last night assumed the aspect of a comet; shot out a train of fire which lightened towards Egypt and the far east, portending peace to Italy, and war to the land which its aspects menaced."

"May I answer like a man," inquired Morison, "or do you desire me to worship your goblin, pay court to your star, and interpret all according to your own wish?"

"As you please, General Roldan," said the other, somewhat sharply.

"I wish," said Morison, "that your demon were an admissible witness in a case of mysterious paternity; should the Lady Rose resist my plea of relationship, where shall I find the spiritual counsellor of Napoleon to cite him on my behalf? But your demon says I am becoming cold in the cause of liberty and equality; now my answer is, liberty and equality are but mere sounds with Napoleon himself: he who has dreams of dictatorships and of kingly crowns will not be molested with visions of liberty and equality. Is not my surmise as accurate as that of your goblin?"

Napoleon pinched Morison's ear, and said, "Go to—go to—Roldan, you are quick-sighted, as well as quick-witted; we are friends in spite of the conjectures of man or fiend."

As he said this Napoleon took a stride or two, muttered

some inaudible words, and then said, "Well, but the star—now for the star."

"Oh! the star appeared for all who were born on the same night that Napoleon was born. Perhaps some dreaming poet of that hour sets down the star to the account of his verse; perhaps some miserable fisherman, on whose birth-hour the star vouchsafed to twinkle, blesses it as his own light while he hauls in his net with an additional fish in its meshes. No, no—yonder star is perhaps a new world more magnificent than our own, from which God has withdrawn the veil of five thousand years. For what it foretold last night of peace in Italy and war for Egypt, I could speak more accurately, had I read the despatches which the Child of Destiny has received, not from the moon, but from the directory—not from the comet, but from Carnot."

"Bah! bah!" said Napoleon; "you will have faith in my star some day; it will kindle on my way east, west, north, and south; on the spicy mountains of Asia, the hot sands of Egypt, the snowy uplands of Russia, and the green vales of Britain."

"Never!" Morison quickly replied; "never on the latter; the sea will float with dead bodies, and every step you take will be on a slain man, before French is taught in Glasgow, and you are throned at Dun-Edin!"

"We must do what our destiny directs," answered Napoleon; "and so good-night."

On his way to the camp, Morison found the Lady Rose and her Italian attendant walking amid a bed of flowers, which, untouched by the soldiers in forming their bivouac because of their fragrance and beauty, had caught her eye: she held one or two of them in her hand, when Morison said, "Lady, our fortunes, and our births are different, yet what means fate in bringing us so strangely together? Nay, look not down, turn not away, nor think me cold or estranged; I dared not trust myself much in your presence: I am disowned—disinherited. I—"

"Morison," said the Lady Rose, calmly, "are we not brother and sister in misfortune? a cloud hangs over your birth, a mystery hangs over mine. The world has called us brother and sister: what can tie hearts closer—what ties can be dearer!"

"I dare not accept the relationship thus generously conferred on me," said Morison; "you are of high descent—I am a creature of yesterday; a chance seed dropped by the wind; who shall say from what air it came! I have much to do, Rose, before the world will admit me to the place to which you have advanced me."

She smiled as she replied, "Nay, dwell not so much on

the cloud which hangs over you lest men say you are afraid, lest your noble blood should lessen your personal merit."

"I did not expect such graciousness," said Morison, much moved.

"Nay," answered Rose, "I have selfish views in it; but let me whisper what I have to say, for stones in our glens have ears, and so have the trees of Italy. I foresee in the career of this Child of Destiny of yours—a military tyranny—a dictator—an emperor: this expedition to Egypt will veil his views in Europe for a time; but when he returns, nay, perchance sooner, Morison Roldan, my brother, will have seen that the liberty he has been worshipping is a demon, and equality a dream. And then he will think of his sister Rose." Tears dropped from her eyelids as she uttered this and hurried away, refusing to listen to his answer, for she saw his soul was in his eyes, and his heart on his lips.

CHAPTER XII.

From yonder pyramids, twenty centuries, behold your actions.

NAPOLÉON.

THE same sun which shone so brightly on the departing sails of the French expedition to Egypt, as to be numbered among Napoleon's suns, shone also on the bay and braes of Glengarnock; but the light lay quiet on the unruffled waters, and on the eternal hills, and no one imagined that it shone for any higher purpose than to warm the air, and call forth the herbs and flowers. The shepherd, with his ewes, and lambs, and dogs, lay enjoying the warmth; the vessels lay motionless on the water; the sea mews sat as moveless on the wave as they did on the rocks; nay, so much did this silence impress itself on the mind, that a district rhymist averred in verse, that the song of the lark had more of heaven in it, and the voice of the streams less of earth than usual. This, however, has been considered a touch of nationality: the sun was not to be allowed to shine exclusively for Napoleon, and a supplemental ray or two was claimed for old Scotland, and perhaps with equal justice.

How this stillness happened in a land of clouds, and streams, and echoing hills, learned men may explain; one tongue in the district, and that by no means a musical one, was at least unstilled; it belonged to our old clamorous acquaintance, Nickie Neevison. She squalled like a sea mew along the shore: she croaked like a hoodie crow on the hills; her tongue jingled as loud as the fire bell in the street of the vil-

lage, nor could she confine her din to those places, but made her way to the Elfin-glen, lifting her voice louder at every step. Whenever she approached a house, or observed any one coming, she shouted out, "Terrible news!—terrible news! He's away to the land of Egypt—he's off to the house of bondage. Oh waur than a'! waur than a'!—his refusing to be laird of Howeboddom—to be Lord of Roldan was naught to this. Oh, had he come hame but and drained Locher; or set up a steam engine, or planned a railroad to the moon—but the land of Egypt! God have a care of us! How will he wade the Red Sea, and walk through' the Wilderness!"

These mysterious words called forth the miller of Glen-garnock—he added his exclamations to those of Nickie, "The land of Egypt—horrid be't! horrid be't!—the house of bondage! prodigious, woman: but this is horrid!" He turned the water off his mill wheel, and walked onward with Nickie.

Out came Dominie Milligan from his school—his exclamations were equally loud, and more learned. "Oh, wonderful are thy ways! wonderful are thy ways! Morison will now clear up the scripture to the confusion of all doubters; he will go to the grave of Pharaoh-Necho. He will see the serpent of Aaron, called by the poet the serpent of old Nile; he will learn tidings of the plague of flies—peradventure of that of lice."

"Filthy bodie!" muttered Nickie.

"He will also measure the Red Sea, taste manna, eat lentils, catch locusts, and see if the waters of Marah be like the wells of Moffat." The dominie joined the other two, and marched for the glen.

Hugh Heddles, Esquire, of the firm of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, heard these exclamations amid the din of his machinery; out he came; was told the wondrous tale, and said calmly, "It is not at all wondrous; what is sailing in a well-found ship to the harbour of Alexandria, compared to the marvel of having gathered the disobedient waters of this idle stream into one current and poured them upon the complicated machinery of the establishment of Heddles, Treddles, Warp, Waft, and Company, by which this whole country is to be exalted and enriched? We must write to Morison, though, and get him to send home a specimen of the cotton cloth in which the seven queens of Pharaoh-Necho are embalmed. I'm told it is an oriental twill." So saying, he returned to his mills.

Nanse Halberson was that morning on her way with Jeanie Rabson, to hear the tidings of Morison which the night before had reached the Elfin-glen; at the meeting of the roads they found Nickie, the miller, and the dominie.

"Oh, Nanse, woman!" exclaimed Nickie, "grand news,

brave news for you; Morison's off to Egypt, and he'll bring ye hame ane of the rods of the magicians to work your cantraps wi'—it will beat hemlock hollow."

"And oh, Jeanie Rabson," said the dominie, "ought we not to rejoice that sae devout a lad and sae gospel-learned, is gane to that ancient country; the cradle of the scripture! Oh what grand expositions I will now be able to give on the cloud of darkness by day and the pillar of fire by night, and on the temptation of Joseph, and on Pharaoh's lean kye. Oh Jeanie, the kye of Starkstarvit, of whilk ye said ye could count ilka rib, were Martinmas marts compared to them."

"Fool bodie!" said Nickie, "that's no the weird and the mister of the matter. Wha shall break the sad tidings to Mary Morison! wha shall tell her that her ae bairn—her only jo and deary, is awa to the land of the plague and the pestilence! Wha shall tell her but me, and oh, I'll do't cannily. 'Mary,' I'll say, 'dinna be alarmed; for though the sea is rough and deep, and the sand of Egypt like melted lead, and the wind comes with neither rain nor dew on its wings, but bearing blight and famine; and though the swords of the enemy are sharp and their shot poisoned, and there's nae food but paddockstools, and nae drink but camel water, yet, Mary, the Lord is strong, and can work miracles as weel now as of old, and though Morison is in kittle company, ye canna tell where a blister may light.' There, now! I think I can manage the matter discreetly." And Nickie looked right and left for approbation.

"Prodigious, woman! But that wad be horrid!" exclaimed the miller.

"Thou art one of Job's comforters," muttered the dominie.

"Ye may save your tender heart all this anxiety," said Jeanie Rabson, "for Mary Morison knew the whole yestreen."

"She maun hae hired an aerial post mistress, then," said Nickie Neevison, "for I am sure the tidings came na by land. But I'll e'en awa up to the castle, and learn if they hae had speerings of our bonnie Lady Rose and Lord Roldan."

"You are forestalled there too," said Nanse. "Where should our bonnie Lady Rose and Lord Roldan be but in their ain castle. See ye not yon barge anchored in the bay; and see ye not the banner of the house of Roldan flying on the Eagle Tower?"

"Nickie Neevison's deaf—Nickie Neevison's blind!" exclaimed Nickie, humbled to the earth on finding that her intelligence was cold; so away she went in another direction, to spread the news that Lord Roldan and the Lady Rose had come home in a ship made by the witchcraft of Nanse, and that the same power that accomplished this would nae

doubt, she said, waft Morison away and bring him safely home, "for the deil's aye gude to his ain."

While these rumours were floating about the hills and dales of Glengarnock, the flotilla which bore our hero and his fortunes was wafted by favourable winds towards the land of Egypt. Napoleon, Murat, Lannes, Desaix, Morison, and two or three learned men, whose object was to explore the antiquities of the land, were all in one vessel. They sat on deck looking on isles and shores memorable in classic story. A veil of mist, which concealed the isle of Candia, was lifted up for a moment, and the "Land of Jupiter—the land of Jupiter!" was the exclamation of all who were learned enough to know that the Thunderer was nursed among the rocks of that far-famed isle.

"Now," said Lannes to Napoleon, "where lies this land of Egypt which we have all heard so much of, where we are to have towns and estates? I suppose it is some El Dorado or other, like that which we read of in the only book I ever read—Candide."

"Oh," said Napoleon with a smile, looking first at the sea and then at a map spread before him, "Roldan will inform you; the land of Egypt was the first land he ever read about."

"Egypt," said Morison, "is the mother of all nations."

"The mother of all nations," said Lannes; "that's number one."

"From her all learning and art have come."

"That's two."

"In her the chosen people of God resided as slaves."

"That's three, friend Roldan."

"But God wrought their deliverance; he sent ten plagues upon the land."

"Number four. This Scotchman excels."

"Namely, the plague of darkness, the plague of locusts, the plague of flies, the murrain of beasts, the plague of hail, the plague of frogs, the plague of boils, and the death of the first born."

"Four and eight make twelve," said Lannes. "Go on."

"Besides these came the plague of lice."

"I believe in that," said the other, "some of our own regiments are populous."

"And the plague of blood."

"I have faith in that also; we must let blood for it—a common cure."

"The heart of Pharaoh," continued Morison, "was hardened. But the Lord commanded his people to depart; and he sent a pillar of darkness to guide them by day, and a pillar of fire to lead them by night; and he dried up the Red Sea, and they passed to the Land of Promise dry shod."

"The devil's dozen in all!" exclaimed Lannes. "Well, I

swear I never heard so many improbable fictions related in a breath before. By Heaven, Roldan! you fight no better than you fib."

At this moment Napoleon grasped the arm of Morison, and with much emotion whispered, "Can it be true what mariners say, that spectre ships traverse the ocean, and with their skeleton crews and sails, through which the sun and stars twinkle, intimate disasters and death? Twice have the skirts of the mist been lifted up, and twice have I seen a dim half-defined ship move past. What can it denote?"

"It denotes," said Morison, for the breeze wafted aside the mist for a moment, "it denotes that one more terrible than a spectre is at hand. Yonder sails Nelson, the Napoleon of the waves; if he see us there is no escape."

"Nelson!" said Napoleon; "he is indeed no spectre; but it is not his fortune to meet the Child of Destiny. No, Roldan; my star misleads him. I care not, fortune, what you refuse, if you allow me but to land my heroes on the shores where Alexander and Cæsar trod; that done, and the aspect of the world is changed. Sit down, Roldan, and let us talk over this matter. Our brother soldiers are fine fellows for the fighting day, but they can render reasons only for hurrying a march, or storming a position; besides, I must not gratify my savans with any more of Lannes's comments upon Scripture."

Napoleon resumed the discourse. "We land in Egypt; we fight a battle and conquer it; I leave men to civilize it, and establish manufactories and commerce, and pass into Syria. I fight a battle, and gain a victory under the walls of Jerusalem. Constantinople is planetstruck at my approach; the armies of the sultan tremble and disperse at the coming of the God of Fire! as they will call me in their oriental style. I employ my skill and render it impregnable—a second Gibraltar."

"Render what impregnable?" inquired Morison. "You march too rapidly for me. You cannot mean Constantinople!"

"And pray what other place should I mean?" said Napoleon, sharply.

"Well, you mean Constantinople, then," answered Morison. "But pray how do you reconcile all this with your notions of liberty and equality? granting no liberty to any one but to ourselves; and what reasons will you render to the world for attacking a nation with whom we are at peace, and who have manifested no ill-will to us?"

"There spoke the islander, who has king, lords, and commons to consult, before he dares unkennel a fox. Why, man, the goddess of liberty, whom we serve, has declared war against despotism over all the earth, and chosen me for her general; and pray who will have the impertinence to ask the

reasons for a leader's conduct, who has fifty thousand men at his back! Ah, Roldan!"

"But what will history say of Napoleon!"

"And what cares Napoleon for the irony or the sarcasm of historians' pens; besides, I shall bribe the best of them with pensions, and moreover write my own history. I have learned description from Ossian, religion from Gibbon; and I have only to add knowledge, and lucid clearness of style, and the thing is done. I shall treat Europe like an old courtesan, who must obey the strongest."

The sea breeze, and the motion of the ships, made many of the most talkative silent. Lannes and Murat alone maintained their gayety; the former observed, with an oath, that when he was not fighting he loved to be talking.

"And as for myself," said Murat, "I talk and fight at once, as thus: the enemy's horse are drawn up, I spur to the charge; How the devil dare you, sir! I say to the leader, as my sword descends on his helmet; how the devil dare you, sir, cross swords with Joachim Murat? I break through them, a fierce fiend of a fighting fellow, with shoulders like Hercules, singles me out, and thinks he has me; instead of a blow I give him a thrust, saying, as he leaves his saddle, now honoured is your carcass, in being dissected by the handsome swordsman!"

"That will do, Joachim," said Lannes, "you speak to the letter; now I clench my teeth and spare not of blows, but as for a word, none do I utter."

Loud laughed Desaix and observed, "We are all oddities: for my part, I despise the luxury of soft couches and rich living, all that I desire is glory to my country. This hard deck is to me cygnet down; this coarse biscuit is equal to the manna which fed the Israelites, and a cup of cold water I prefer to wine, which perfumes the air as you drink it. We shall find all my luxuries in perfection in the land whither we are going." As he said this, he smiled sarcastically on his comrades, both of whom loved splendid attire and a well-furnished table.

Lannes approached Napoleon and Morison. "There sits Roldan as composed as if he were in his mother's bosom, while the Child of Destiny seems as weak as a boy of three years old; Murat with his plumes reels as if he had drunk a dozen of Burgundy, and Desaix lies quiet and pretends to be a philosopher; in short, we are all as pale as Ossian's ghosts, of whom our general loves to talk. But that saucy islander skims along Neptune's green domain, as bedlamite bards say, with the alacrity of a sea mew, and has a bright eye, and a ruddy cheek. I envy him by all the leeks of Egypt! an oath which I borrowed from one of these—what call you them? savans."

"Lannes, my friend," said Morison, "I am, as you say, an

islander ; I am more, I was all but born in the sea, for every wave which tumbled on the shore shook my mother's shealing ; I was rocked in a stormy cradle, the waves are therefore pleasant to my sight."

"Hold there," said Lannes, "you speak of your native cottage. Gad ! I dreamed that you were born in a castle with seven towers at least. Had I known that, I should have put in a bolder love plea for yon pretty island cousin of thine. I mayn't just know so much of the ten plagues of Egypt, as you call them, as you do : Desaix there, damn him, has almost choked himself, with laughing at my Scriptural expositions ; yet if daring deeds can win love, and they have generally done so, I should like to see who would go before Lannes."

"I have not stood in the way of your love any more than of your learning, General Lannes," replied Morison, "but the name of Rose Roldan must not be bandied about like that of the goddess of liberty ; her mind is more akin to a Napoleon, than a Lannes ; and for birth, her line reaches back without a blemish to the Norman conquest."

"The bastard Norman conquered England," answered Murat with a sneer. "Know you of any illegitimate Briton, General Roldan, who hopes to found an empire ?"

"I am one, Joachim Murat," said Morison, composedly, "but my dreams are of republics, not of empires ; were we on a spot steadier for your feet than this deck, I should demand an explanation of these words ; you will find my courage is not so questionable as my birth."

"Silence both !" exclaimed Napoleon, stamping till the deck shook ; "there is the firm land you ask for, but behold it is waving with turbans, and gleaming with steel, and we must conquer before we find a place to quarrel upon." As he said this, the breeze slowly wafted back the mist, and the land of Egypt had the veil of a thousand years withdrawn from it : there rolled the seven-headed Nile, and there in the distance rose the majestic pyramids, while crowding down to the shore came the Mameluke chivalry ; not in rank succeeding rank, like the disciplined cavalry of Europe, but in threes and fours ; their light, loose dresses fluttering with the rapidity of their motions, the crescent glittering in their bright turbans, and the sun shining on their burnished sword blades and steel-mounted pistols. They stood to the amount of five thousand, gazing upon the descent of the Child of Destiny ; and the moment they saw the infantry land and draw up in column, the artillery come ashore, and each trooper spur his horse through the surge to the dry land, the whole covered by the maritime artillery of the fleet, and moved at the wave of one man's hand, they laid their bridles on the horses' necks, and with menacing gestures retreated into the interior.

The French, with Napoleon at their head, advancing along

the banks of the Nile, came within sight of the pyramids, which, rising out of an ocean of sand, seemed to pierce the clouds. The imaginations of the men had been so excited with descriptions derived from antiquity of this African paradise, that when they beheld the boundless ruins, the shoreless sea of hot sand which the breeze wafted into their faces, and felt the force of the burning sun, whose beams no foliage hindered from falling on the weary soldier, they burst out into fierce murmurs. "Is that the mansion," said one of the leaders, pointing to a mausoleum, "which I was promised in this favoured land?"

"And is this breeze, filled with burning sand, the wind which I was told came redolent of frankincense and honey, and fed us without cookery?" exclaimed a subaltern.

"And behold!" burst out a weary private, casting himself down indignantly on the glowing sand, "behold I take possession of the ground which the citizen general granted to every private soldier."

Even Murat and Lannes, incommoded by the burning heat, and their impetuous courage melted by their toilsome march, murmured not low, but loudly, and even tore the national cockades from their hats, trampled them in the sand, and exclaimed, "The directory has transported us hither to die, and not to conquer; is this the land of corn, and wine, and oil, which they promised us?"

"Silence your seditious ravings," said Napoleon, "yonder is a harvest worthy of the reaper."

Murat and Lannes looked; at first they thought snow had fallen on the ground, from the wilderness of turbans which occupied all the space between the pyramids and the Nile. It was the Mameluke chivalry, who, concentrating their forces, had intrenched themselves in the way to Upper Egypt, covering the foot with their magnificent body of horse, amounting to full five-and-twenty thousand men. These African cavaliers, confident in their horsemanship and unrivalled skill with the cimeter, cried vehemently to be led to the charge; but Murat, who commanded them, restrained their impetuosity, though he gazed with some contempt on the small close columns of his enemies, who advanced as if moved by mechanism, rather than impelled by a heroic spirit to the attack of his position. In a moment a hundred pieces of artillery poured their streams of iron on the Moslem columns, and the foot advancing fired with rapidity and precision; all that resisted died, all that fled to the left, perished in the Nile. "Now," cried Murat, "charge, my Mamelukes, we shall cut them up like gourds!" The dust rose like a whirlwind: the earth seemed to thunder, spurned by innumerable hoofs: the astonished columns of the French gazed on the rushing avalanche, and levelling their muskets as one man, fired volley

upon volley, and then prepared to expand into line, and charge. It was a needless demonstration: ten thousand horses running riderless showed how vain the burning valour of their riders had been: the rapid plunging of the disembodied into the Nile told the dread refuge which despair had for them: a thousand veterans sat at gaze, refusing to fly, and were shot down as birds are from the perch; while Murad, collecting the relics of his dauntless chivalry, galloped from the disastrous field towards the desert, exclaiming, "Napoleon is the god of fire!"

The flight of the Mamelukes was the signal for the Murat of France to pursue the Murad of Egypt. That impatient leader stood with his hand on the mane and his foot in the stirrup, murmuring at the glory which Lannes, and Morison, and Desaix were obtaining. "They will leave me nothing to do, by Heaven!" cried he, when the Moslem army sank like snow in the rain, beneath their terrible fire. The moment he saw Murad withdraw from the bloody press, he sprang into the saddle—his trumpets sounded—and away he went like the wind, his white plume dancing, and his sword glimmering, and calling out, "Frenchmen, follow Le Beau Sabreur!"

"There he goes!" exclaimed Napoleon, "the eagle of France after the vulture of Egypt; if he escape the pursuit of Murat, he may hope to escape from the angel of death."

Napoleon, as he said this, stood on that mystic Sphinx, which for four thousand years has been a riddle too hard for the wit of the world to solve, and looked long and anxiously after the cavalry, his face darkening as he gazed. He descended hastily, and laying his hand on that of Morison, led him aside: "I know," he said, "the quality of your soul, and that it will give you pleasure to do a deed of nobleness. Take that body of cavalry, follow on the steps of Murat—you will come up with him, and find that he needs your aid much. Fly, Roldan! spare not the spur now, nor the steel hereafter."

Morison bowed, and in a minute was mounted and gone. For the first three miles the way lay along a hard sand, with here and there a green herb nibbled close to the root by the eager teeth of the wild ass and the camel: for three miles more his route lay through a wilderness of obelisks and porticoes; with figures cut-out of porphyry as black as the wing of the raven, that seemed the sole inhabitant of the desolate city; for three miles more he skirted the Nile, and there began to observe tokens of strife. At a bend of the stream the Mamelukes had halted to give their horses a drink; a dozen or so lay shot down, or sabred, on the spot; but more than an equal number of Frenchmen lay dead beside them.

"We shall be in action soon, my lads," said Morison, "now mind my words. It is only by discipline that we excel these

wild people. Keep your ranks—allow no one to single any of you out—but charge in a line, for in single combat they surpass us as much as we exceed them in discipline.”

They had not ridden another mile, when they heard the cry and clang of mortal strife, the discharge of pistols and the clash of swords, mingled with that indescribably mournful sound which is borne on the wind from a field of battle.

On passing one of those hills on which the ancients wrote their actions in a language too profound for modern learning to explain, he found the two Murats engaged in fierce and doubtful strife. The numbers were nearly equal, but the cavaliers of the Egyptian Murad were chosen men, and, moreover, managed their horses with greater ease, and their swords with greater skill, than the soldiers of the Murat of France. The latter giving way to his impetuous valour, and confiding in his strength and dexterity, rushed upon the former at once, and approached nigh enough to exchange several blows with the equally vigorous, skillful, and more wily barbarian. Murad and his cavaliers, at a signal, separated and fled: then halted at once: turned on their pursuers, and succeeded in cutting many down before they were able to unite and resist in bodies. This stratagem had been repeated more than once. Murat was sorely pressed and in great danger of losing both his troops and his life. Morison came up at the gallop, and halting his men, poured in volley after volley of carbines; and then, leaving a hundred steady men to maintain the fire wherever they saw the enemy thickest, spurred to the charge. Murad and his men withdrew at once from the combat, and such was their wild discipline, and such the excellence of their horses, that they united again at a mile distant; nor did the noble animals which they rode seem to have suffered either from the rapidity of their flight or the repeated charges they had made or sustained in the strife.

Morison's blood was up; he had been hotly engaged with a body of the enemy, who, differing in dress from their Mameluke companions, and obeying only a leader of their own, resisted with determined obstinacy, and now, in their retreat, struck inland, instead of retiring with Murad along the banks of the Nile. He pursued them hotly. When they observed this they separated; the pursuers did the same; and Morison, as he emerged from a wilderness of obelisks and columns, found that the leader of these Moslems or Arabs was alone before him. This chief had neither saddle, nor stirrup, nor whip, nor spur; but the animal which he rode seemed a portion of the man; a word made it move to the right or to the left, rush onward like the wind, or wheel round and charge on the pursuer. He was retreating on the desert; yet not at anything like an impatient pace; in truth, he seemed willing to grant the meeting his pursuer sought, for

he wheeled his steed round in a moment, and pounced upon Morison at once. He staid but the exchange of a couple of blows; he spoke to his horse, and left his foe to follow through the burning sand as he best might. This manœuvre he repeated several times; still continuing his retreat, and—what surprised Morison not a little—he appeared more desirous to prove his skill than to spill blood.

When this pursuit had continued a couple of miles, and the chieftain had reached the borders of the great desert, which extended as far as the eye could see, in wave succeeding wave of hot sand, on the ridges of which the sun shed a declining ray, he drew himself proudly up, and bowing, intimated that he would await the coming of his adversary. Morison had now leisure to look on him. He seemed some thirty years old; was as brown as the sands over which he rode; his arms were long, rough, and sinewy; his breast bare, and of the colour of melted copper; his beard short and peaked, while his bright blue eye spoke of European rather than Arab descent. His lineage did not remain long a matter of conjecture, for he exclaimed when Morison approached, "Wha wad hae thought of meeting Mary Morison's son sae far frae hame!"

Morison halted, drew his rein, gazed with eyes that witnessed his astonishment; and though he knew not the name of his foe, the sound of the Scottish tongue was enough, he thrust his sword with a clang into the sheath, and holding out his hand said, "Whoever you are, you are welcome to the son of Mary Morison."

The chief sprung to the ground, and accepting the proffered hand of his countryman, clasped it warmly, and down they sat on the sand gazing earnestly at each other.

"We have had warm work of it," said the chief; "the proud Mameluke chivalry will never more brave the fire of European discipline; Murad and five thousand alone are left; the slaughter will strike terror to the wall of China."

"It has been a bloody day," answered Morison, "but in it has fallen the Mameluke empire of Egypt. May I ask what will be my countryman's share in the loss; and what can a general of the victors do for him?"

The Scot laughed loud, "God bless the lad," he said, "what loss can I sustain? that burning desert lies between Napoleon and my patrimony; nothing but the plague wind of the wilderness, or the fire of heaven can disturb me! But many thanks to you nevertheless."

"Situated as you are," said Morison, "what can have brought you to a strife so dangerous—a ball from a cannon or a musket might have hindered your return to your empire in the wilderness?"

"It's God's truth, that," said the Scot; "I marvel how I escaped yet, for I was in the hurlyburly of the cannon, and

never beheld such work. 'Ruin, with her sweeping besom,' as Robin Burns says, was there : and then I was in the tulzie, atween the Murats. Lord ! I never beheld twa sic born deevils ; but conscience, lad, if ye had na drapped in on us, wi' yere mounted carbines, ane of them maun hae kissed the cimeter."

The Scot now brought from a sort of pouch made of wolf-skin, a piece of bread, an onion, and a small flask of silver, and said, "Behold the food of our people ; will you partake !" Morison ate of the bread—it seemed made of the kernels of nuts ; and he drank of the silver flask—the liquor was beyond all measure refreshing. "There now, Morison," said his entertainer, "ye see what it is no to be aye left to our ain judgment ; a white hand has slipped in these dates and almonds—eat."

"Now, my friend," said Morison, after a second draught from the flask, "tell me what makes you dwell among this wild people, and why you have put the crescent in your head-gear."

The Scot laughed as he said, "Wild people ! It wad be weel for you were you half sae civilized ; there's not a man amang us but would rather perish than tell a lie. And for the crescent : it's but a short step between the religion I left and the ane I found ; there's predestination in baith ; but should onybody ask ye if Alexander Sprott has grown Mohammedan, say God kens, and that's the truth on't."

"Sprott !" exclaimed Morison, "and are ye one of the Sprotts of Orr ; the Bruce Sprotts, as we always called them ?"

"The same, the same," cried the other, "gie's your hand for the remembrance of the thing. Our ancestor wan the Moat of Orr by breakfasting King Robert in his utmost need, and syne some call us Bruce Sprotts, and some Bannock Sprotts ; but we prefer Bruce Sprott as the maist kindly. A damned English punster tried to fix the toname of Brose Sprott on me ; but if he had held his tongue he wadna hae got his nose slitten."

"I think I can offer you something more to your liking than your present way of life," said Morison. "You shall have a command in my division."

"Yere daft," interrupted the other. "What ! give up my freedom of soul to hae the pleasure of leading a thousand hired cutthroats, as that deel's buckie, the Child of Destiny, bids ane ; see him damned first ! I'm daft, and daft enough, but nae just sae daft as that yet. Help this Corsican to make an empire to himsel under pretence of making a republic ! Na, na, my grandame o' the moat did nae cool brose to the great King Robert, that her descendant might haud the stirrup of Europe till Napoleon should mount. Na, na, but ye maun come wi' me ; ye shall have your portion ; a brood of

nags that naught but the wind can overtake; that's aye of them, and no the best neither," pointing to his horse. "Come hither, Morison—I ca' him after you, for d'ye ken that I came hither on purpose to capture and conduct ye where ye will be mickle made of." The beautiful animal as his master spoke snuffed the air and paced round him and round him, stooping his head and expanding his nostrils. "There, take that," and he gave him a handful of almonds, "and come back when I bid you." The animal walked off to its place.

Morison sat astonished at the words he had heard. "And came to capture me?" he said; "well, I'm glad I did not know this sooner, else our strife might have been deadly. Came to capture me?"

"Weel, and are ye no captured?" said Sprott, "ye're as much captured gif I choose to say sae, as man can be."

Morison sprung to his feet, drew his sword, and said, "When we meet next, we shall either part friends or—"

"I accept the word," said Sprott, "sae sit down and dinna be whipping out yere whinyard at every word that wants explanation. I say the word, ye're my captive, if captive I choose to consider ye. Ay, ye may look at me; but there are other hands and cimeters in the desert than ours. Can ye tell me if yon riders coming on our track be my children or thine?"

Morison, whose eyes had watched both aside and behind, beheld, and not without apprehension, a score of Arabs galloping towards him; their long lances glittering, and the tails of their horses streaming, from the rapidity of their movements. Sprott held up his hand; they halted. "I mean but to show you, Morison, that you are mine if I choose to say so; but I wish to persuade rather than force you. The Lily of the Desert said you have only to whisper in his ear, Rose Roldan, and he will follow you to the world's end."

Morison did not hear the concluding words distinctly;—he sprung upon his horse, pulled out his pistols, seized the bridle in his teeth, and rushed on those who opposed his way. But when he approached the horsemen they opened right and left, bowing their heads and lowering their lances.

"Weel done, sons of the desert!" exclaimed Sprott, as he joined them, "he cannot be taken by force without jeoparding his life; but he can be captured by wile and by stratagem, my brethren." They all bowed, and saying, "God is great!" turned the heads of their horses towards the desert.

CHAPTER XIII.

A damsel with a dulcimer,
In a vision once I saw,
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on a dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

COLERIDGE.

Musing on his adventure, yet urging his horse to speed, Morison retraced his way among the broken columns and colossal statues. Ere he reached the banks of the Nile he was met by Murat. The stains of his late hot encounter were on his dress: the white plume had been shorn from his helmet; his clothes were rent; yet he rode untouched by sword and unharmed by shot. He held out his hand when distant thrice the length of his horse, and said with much dignity, "Roldan, you have conquered me by your noble forgiveness of my rude words; and not content with that, you have saved me from yonder relentless sabres and lances. Napoleon will take a new hint in war from your mounted carbineers."

Morison accepted the hand so frankly offered; and riding abreast and conversing on the views of the army, they reunited themselves to the standard of Napoleon, and continued their march into the upper provinces.

The victory achieved, the beauty of the banks of the Nile, and the sight of so many majestic monuments of the first monarchs of mankind, cheered the hearts of the French soldiers; nor were there wanting men, even in the ranks, who gazed on the land where God had wrought miracles in favour of his chosen people, with reverence and even awe. Some even with the Bible in their hands, endeavoured to imagine the line of way pursued by the Israelites, when in quest of the Land of Promise. Among these Morison was conspicuous; and his knowledge, curiosity, and sagacity, were as much talked of among the band of French antiquaries who accompanied the expedition, as his fiery valour and presence of mind were the talk of the soldiers.

They had now approached the upper provinces, and though they beheld hourly Arabian cavaliers gazing upon them in twos and threes from the edge of the desert, and now and then a mounted Mameluke reconnoitring their long and toilsome march, they experienced no resistance. But when they advanced upon the dominions of the great Arab tribes, who occupy the African, as well as the Asiatic side of the,

Red Sea, they began to feel the hostility of that wild and unconquered people. No soldier was safe at fifty paces from his comrades; an armed Bedouin would stoop upon him like a bird of prey from the cloud, and sever, at a single sweep of the cimeter, the head from his body.

Napoleon called Murat and Morison into his presence. "Emarch to-day for Syria," he said, "and I am resolved to leave none but energetic and sagacious spirits, to secure and extend our Egyptian dominions. In thy namesake, the Mameluke leader, thou, Murat, wilt find a foe worthy of even Le Beau Sabreur; and see! here is a new plume for thy helmet, with a diamond to fix it by; I need not tell thee that a lady's gift must never be sullied." Murat blushed, and took the plume with submission and reverence.

"Roldan, you are alike skilful with tongue and sword. Eloquence is esteemed as much as valour by the poetic Arabs; aid Murat with your best skill. I hear of a certain dame, called by the Arabs, in their poetic way, the Lily of the Desert; she can ride when she chooses at the head of three thousand horse. That female falcon must be watched; should she venture out with a train of soft comrades like her of Sheba, you know, Roldan, why be gentle and amorous if you will; but should she come with cimeter, pistol, and spear, forget the sex in the foe. I commend you to your fortunes."

Low bowed Murat, and low bowed Morison; Napoleon sat on horseback with his face towards Suez, but moved not.

"Roldan," thus whispered Lannes, "this desert princess is a propheticess too, they say, and has eyes like a hawk, and cheeks like a China orange. Should she fall in love with you, and compel you to become monarch of all that splendid empire of burning sand, you must make over to me your interest in yonder blooming island girl. I swear by the plagues of Egypt, and the eyes of Potiphar's wife, that all the yellow lilies of Libya are not worth yon rose of old Scotland!"

"Roldan, my friend," said Desaix, "charm down, if thou canst, the paladin impetuosity of thy comrade Joachim. These barbarian enemies are as cunning as serpents; they will wile you like birds into their snares; they will entice you into the desert, and the desert, let me tell you, is as treacherous as the quicksands of Glengarnock; a dusty whirlwind will wrap you in its wings, and the hyenas howl over your bones. Peace be with you!"

Napoleon laid his hand suddenly on Morison's arm, and said, in a half whisper, "Did you see the Napoleon star last night? I observed it from the summit of one of the pyramids; it was dimmer than usual."

"All the stars seem dimmer than usual to me," replied Morison.

"True—true—Lannes says the same—it must be so! And yet, Roldan, I have not my usual alacrity of spirit. We are creatures of latitude, I fear, of climate. This eastern land, which kindled the genius of Cæsar and Mohammed, damps that of Napoleon." He rode off without a word more, and perhaps unconscious that he had spoken.

No sooner had the chief of the French marched for Asia, than the tribes of the African desert, uniting themselves with Murad and his Mamelukes, hovered on the skirts of Egypt, like a flock of sea cormorants watching a whale into which the harpooner hath stricken a dozen deadly weapons. They moved as the French moved; and avoiding the lead, and courting the sabre, succeeded in perplexing the new governor. At last the word ran that they were about to give him battle. Murat, when he heard this, put on his most splendid apparel, mounted his ablest steed, and drawing a sword taken from the armory at Milan, which had belonged to the great Duke of Parma, galloped to and fro, while his war plume, streaming as he flew, was to his soldiers as a banner displayed, and betokened coming strife. Even Morison, on whose mind external show made little impression, could not help joining in the acclamations with which his soldiers hailed him; the wild men of the desert took up the cry, and as they excelled in equestrian exercises they were qualified to give judgment. Murat was gratified beyond measure with this, and rode closer and closer to the barbaric chivalry who composed the vanguard of the enemy, and bowed to their plaudits, and considered that he was about to conquer them by martial elegance and courtesy.

A wild strain of music rose in the distance, a cloud of dust came rolling from the wilderness, the neighing and the thick beating of the hoofs of innumerable horse approached, and when they halted, a loud burst of trumpets mingled with shouts echoed through the ruins, among which were drawn up the handful of French horse and foot left for the protection of Egypt.

"Let us forward, Roldan, and reconnoitre!" said Murat.

They were soon within musket shot of the Mamelukes and Arabs. At the head of the former sat Murad; at the head of the latter rode the chieftainess alluded to by Napoleon—the Lily of the Desert—she could be but indistinctly seen for the wild cavaliers who pressed around. Her horse was white as the plume of Murat's helmet; and she wore a bonnet glittering with gems.

"I see nothing terrible in this Lily of the Desert," said Murat; "she may be fiercer than she seems, nevertheless: take a thousand horse and foot, and a couple of pieces of cannon, and move against the tigress, while I strive to drive the lion back to his jungles in Abyssinia."

Morison instantly put his men in motion, while Murat, with

the impetuosity which marked his character, rushed head-long against the Mamelukes: pouring squadron after squadron upon their position, while the artillery thundered on their flanks. Their resistance was brief; Murad's cavalry retired rapidly, and Morison, as he advanced against the chieftainess, heard the din of the conflict rolling away along the banks of the Nile.

To war with the Lily of the Desert seemed as hopeless as to contend with the clouds. As Morison advanced her warriors retired, not in either column or line, but in single files or groups, each according to his own pleasure; then rallying in the distance, they awaited the closer approach of their enemy, only to take wing afresh. They seemed to be under various leaders, and to be composed of three tribes. One wore scarlet turbans; another white; and the third rode bareheaded, their curled or matted locks serving for head gear; but all wore loose garments, which they wound round their bodies as they prepared for the onset. They had no banners, neither had they infantry, nor artillery, though some of the foremost of the French cavalry imagined they beheld groups of camels with small cannon or swivels mounted on their pillions or saddles. One and all appeared determined to shun a battle with their pursuers, and when they reached some scattered palm and date trees, which marked the limits of Egypt, the leaders held a brief consultation, and ere Morison could make his dispositions for the attack, they separated. One tribe obliquing to the right, another to the left, while the third dived at once into the wilderness, and could only be marked by the occasional flash of their cimeters through the thick cloud of dust which they trampled into the air.

"You have broken them like a rope of sand, sir," said one of his officers.

"They are loosened like a sheaf of arrows," said a strange voice, "when the thong is cut which ties them."

Morison turned himself hastily round: the last speaker was an anchorite, or holy man, who lived on alms: his dress was threadbare, the part of his robe which touched his knees was not only worn but patched. He rode upon an ass, and instead of a lance, the common weapon of all the equestrians of the desert, he carried a rod. A little pannier covered with wolfskin contained the alms he had collected, and a leathern flask of thin wine, which with an epicure might have passed for bad vinegar, hung at the neck of his ass, for he had no saddle. "Who and what art thou?" said Morison.

"Even a sinner as thou seest me, my son. I have seen other days and happier lands; but where a man's doom is, there must he abide. I dwell at 'The Gate of the Desert,' and God sends charitable men to my habitation, who drop me

a crust of bread and some dates, and so I live. To his name be all the praise."

"See," said Morison, "the sun is within an hour of sinking in the sea; will two hours take me to the Gate of the Desert? I wish to shut it against the flood of barbarians who but now inundate the land."

"His presence be about thee, my son!" said the anchoret; "did my old ears hear thee right? the Gate of the Desert will be to thee as the gate of death, for assuredly the heathen chivalry will be upon thee—they will never allow that dread portal to be held by a foe; and then what will become of my little happy hermitage and the date trees planted by the devout hands of the patriarch himself."

"For every date tree I shall give thee two, and find thee a home in a happier soil, if thou wilt tell me all thou knowest," said Morison, "about the tribes of the land, and show me truly all the perils which encompass the gate."

The anchoret nodded, and rode forward, accompanied by Morison, with about fifty horsemen; the remainder of his men following at a brief interval. "My son," said the holy man, "the desert is not all desert, neither are its rude people all rude; there are little principedoms—*islands*, as it were, wondrously beautiful and fertile amid that ocean of sand; and the tribes who dwell therein, though differing in manners and raiment from the nations of Asia, can boast of glimmerings of knowledge; the art of war is familiar to them; they love fair flowers and cultivate delicious fruits; nor are they insensible to women's charms; the heavenly light of poesy has also shone upon them, and their songs would charm a star from its place, and an Arab from his desire of plunder."

"They are not Arabs, then?" inquired Morison.

"No, they are said to be the descendants of an army of military pilgrims who marched into the desert and found a land fair and the fruits thereof nourishing, and set up their staff and remained. Yet there is a mixture of Arab blood in their veins; verily, the desert air tendeth to wildness, and alas! I remember as a dream of my youth, how I loved to back an unbroke horse and let it gallop at will through the sands of the wilderness; no such sensation of delight has ever come upon me since, save when I humble myself on the threshold of my little sanctuary, while the hyena of the woods and the lion of the desert pass me, reluctant to meddle with one so old and so humble."

The anchoret paused, and exclaimed, holding out his rod before him, "Seest thou that, my son?" Morison rose in his stirrups, and beheld with astonishment a number of pillars of whirling sand moving rapidly along the bosom of the desert; they paused, and seemed to creep for a little space on the earth; then they rose swiftly into the air and were hurried along, their tops reaching the clouds and their bases

now touching, now rising above the earth: the sun poured his horizontal beams through them, and the whole air seemed to boil and blaze with fire. "These are sand demons," said the anchoret: "the swiftest steed cannot run, nor the longest winged eagle fly from them; they destroy life wherever they touch it, and under their wings the mad Cambyases and his hundred thousand men sleep, never more to awaken. But, praise be blest! we approach the Gate of the Desert, and I shall soon have the roof of my cell between me and yon angry heaven." He looked round him as he said this, and his face darkened. "Our hour," he whispered to Morison, "is come; that terrible redness in the air tells, that hell is about to unbar her gates and let loose the simoom—fall upon your face, for lo! it comes." The anchoret fell on his face, and half buried himself, like a bird, in the sand. Morison could not help looking on the demon blast; he saw a blush upon the air like the purple part of a rainbow; it approached, but did not touch the earth, and swept hotly over him. He was all but deprived of speech: his throat swelled, his face became of a purple hue, like the poisonous meteor itself, and he grew faint nigh to falling.

When he arose from the sand his soldiers gathered around him, and carried him in their arms to the Gate of the Desert, and into the anchoret's cell. They placed pickets, pitched their tents, and established themselves in a position sufficiently strong to defy surprise from all the hordes of Libya. The gate, as it was called, consisted of two huge columnar rocks, offering an opening some fifty feet wide, while on either hand a long chain of rocks and precipitous bands formed for many leagues a barrier which a few men could defend against multitudes. To the centre of the gate they brought up their cannon, and then sought the repose which their toilsome march required.

The cell of the holy man, into which Morison was moved, seemed hewn out of one of the flanking rocks of the gate. It consisted of two little crypts, and presented no sort of accommodation save shelter from storm or sunshine. The owner busied himself to make his guest comfortable; he washed his feet in spiced water; he bathed his face and throat in a fluid distilled from herbs, which removed much of the pain inflicted by the simoom, while, to complete the cure, he mingled some wine with a few drops of a liquid bestowed upon him, he said, by Idris, the chief of the Howadat Arabs, which he caused his patient to swallow. Morison felt as if new life were infused into him. He sent for one or two of his principal officers; satisfied himself about the dispositions made, and bidding them come to him by sunrise, stretched himself on the stone bench, and closed his eyes—wishing the anchoret good-night.

"The holy man is gone out to look at the stars," said

Davie Gellock; "let me tell ye of the sight I have seen. This is haunted' as weel as unhal owed land. First comes the pillars of burning dust, enough to suffocate seven deevils; then the demon blows his breath owre the desert, and men drap down by the dozen as if grape shot were poured through them. Weel, the sun gangs down; the stars shine out, and ane expects peace and rest—but whare's that to be found?"

"What is all this about, David?" said Morison. "Have you seen a spirit as well as the simoom?"

"There now!" exclaimed Davie, "I just jaloused as much, and sae he has appeared to you too. God be near us! it's an awfu' thing to die in this accursed land, and hae ane's banes anatomized by the hyenas!"

"Who has appeared?" exclaimed Morison, with a tone of voice that showed sleep was with him dealing.

"I'll tell ye," said Davie: "ye see I skirred round and round, and in and out at that hell gate, as I may safely call it, for I hae my ain doubts of these wily enemies of ours, they're like auld Satan himself, gaye and near hand, when we think them far off. Weel, I rode out, and just as I was coming whigging my ways back, a man darted on me frae amang some date trees, like a flaff of fire. I gat a glisk o' his face, and cried, God be near me!—avaunt ye evil shadow—ye fearful shape. 'Wi' that the spirit—for spirit it was—evanished—but oh! an ever Brose Sprott of Orr Water lived in the flesh, and was carried away by elves as kane to Clootie, yon was his likeness! But, grumph! yere sound asleep. Only see the nature o' some fowk! I have tauld a tale enough to keep a man's soul and body together—enough to open graves, and waken the dead—and yet he's off to the land o' Nod, and minds me nae mair than a slate stane." David retired. The anchoret returned, fastened his door, and was heard by the guard to pray loudly for about an hour; then his light was extinguished and all was silent.

Morison fell asleep in the anchoret's cell at the Gate of the Desert, in the midst of his armed comrades; he did not awaken in the same place, neither when he opened his eyes did he see the cell of stone, nor the face of the holy man, nor the eagles of France glittering in the sun, nor the sparkling of musket and sword. He found himself on a couch of silk, fanned with pleasant airs; he heard the music of falling water; he smelled the odour of jessamine and rose, while the sound of feet in the adjoining chambers was gentle, compared to the tramp and clang of martial and measured strides to which he had been accustomed. He imagined himself in a dream; he sat up; he sprang to his feet; but when he saw himself in the lofty mirrors with which the walls were lined, the burning blood rushed to his temples. His uniform was gone, and he was attired in the loose dress of the east; a frock of white silk reached nigh his sandalled feet, a scarlet sash of netted

gold enclosed his waist, while a turban, without a crescent, but adorned by a single feather from the wing of the golden eagle, was upon his head. He called, but no one spoke; he opened the door and walked into other rooms of what seemed a palace—they were deserted. He sought for sword, and for lance, and for pistol in vain; then striking one of the doors with his foot he made it start from its place, and out he sallied into the open air.

Morison had never seen a spot he thought so lovely: the waters ran pure and sparkling; fields all in pasture, and grazed by innumerable flocks, spread for many a league around; trees, most of them bearing blossom or fruit, rose loftily into the air, and extended their broad leaves like parasols to the sun. The yellow rose and scented jessamine, with lilies of all stripes and hues, were everywhere in bloom, while multitudes of wild birds, that seemed to die the very air with the splendid tints of their plumage, continually fluttered to and fro. A child, the only human being he had yet seen, was chasing a golden butterfly from lily to rose and from rose to lily.

"What is the name of this land?" inquired Morison.

"The Rose of the Wilderness," was the answer.

And well did it deserve the name. As Morison walked onward he began to muse on what he could hardly regard as other than a dream. A kind of twilight consciousness was on him of having been moved in his slumber, and hurried onward as if on the wings of an eagle, and connecting his adventure with Spratt in the desert, and the design hinted of carrying him away captive, he could not help concluding that the Scot and the holy anchoret could throw some light on his present state.

A hill of solid rock rose for a hundred and fifty feet into the air before him, the summit was garlanded with fruit trees and odoriferous shrubs, while from the juttings and seams of the stone ten thousand flowers spouted forth, some short and stunted, others crawling and putting out blossoms by the way, while the greater portion hung in long dishevelled streamers down the almost perpendicular rock, and kept moving in the wind like the tresses of a maiden agitated in the dance. Out of this lofty rock the genius of ancient times had hewn a magnificent temple: man's industry and patience had penetrated a hundred yards and more into the solid stone. Colossal statues of seventy feet high sustained the ceiling on their hands or heads. On the walls was sculptured the creation of man, according to the Jewish history; all the figures were sunk in the material. The same poetic taste was displayed elsewhere: a man tamed a wild horse, another subdued a lion, a third vanquished a sphinx by solving her riddle, a fourth tilled the soil, a fifth gathered in the fruits of the earth, while in the centre sat a majestic figure representing

the Eternal Mover and Maker of all. His beard flowed to his middle—his looks were tranquil and severe; one foot pressed a dolphin, and the other a couchant lion, to intimate that he ruled by sea and land, while the fore finger of his right hand, held upward, indicated that Paradise was the result of all. A fire of spice wood glimmered on the floor, and, free of smoke, diffused an acceptable odour over the silent and untenanted temple—an odour which was too strong for insects, and too intoxicating for birds, and which kept this splendid excavation pure and beautiful.

When Morison returned to the open air, he perceived that on a small mound at a little distance, a genius of a sublimer kind had been at work: scorning the more mechanical drudgery of excavation, it had levelled and smoothed down the rock of which the mound was composed, till a fit foundation was found; on this solid platform a structure rose a hundred feet high in the air, overlooking the date and palm trees, and forming a landmark amid the sandy waves of the desert. The massive blocks of which its columns and entablatures were composed were of all colours, though red and yellow prevailed, and all were polished and so hard, that the arrow from the bow harmed its own steel point more than it did the porphyry. Not only were the columns, with their far-projecting entablatures, entire, but the joints of the enormous slabs which covered the temple in were sound and good; and though richly, nay, fantastically carved and ornamented, neither the sapping rain nor the equally searching sand of the desert had penetrated or harmed it. A statue stood at the end of the temple, fronting the entrance; but it had been wrought out of marble; and time, and enemies, and change of taste, and superstition, had all conspired to injure and destroy it; yet the divine shape and sentiment of the father of the gods triumphed, and Morison imagined he beheld in this marvellous work the temple of Jupiter Ammon, to which curiosity and force had in vain attempted to penetrate.

As he turned from this, the Scot of the desert stood before him. Unbounded seemed the astonishment of that worthy. "I canna believe it—it's no credible; after this ane may swallow aught! is this Morison Roldan? and how came ye here? Save us, man! but I am glad to see you, however ye may hae come. But a hundred miles—and Scotch miles too, of burning desert, wi' the simoon and the sand pillar for yere convoy, was nae joke; the Roons o' Galloway's a drawing-room floor till't!"

All this was said in such a tone of simple sincerity, that Morison, who in his heart had connected Sprott with his unwelcome journey, could not tell what to think of it. Another person in this drama of the desert now joined them—this was the anchoret; he was mounted on his ass, and held a peeled rod in his hand.

"I bid you welcome to the Rose of the Wilderness, my son," said the holy man, with perfect gravity of face; "I see the accursed simoom hath not harmed thee; thanks be to God and to the balsam of Idris, they have wrought this cure! but when didst thou come, and how didst thou come, for on foot thou camest not, I am certain!"

"I'll answer for that," cried a third person, who, mounted on an Arab horse, his dress covered with dust, and joy as well as wrath in his looks, came and almost smothered Morison with the sand, which in his repeated embraces he showered on him. "I'll answer for that," cried Davie Gellock; "but if there's elding enough in Egypt, we will burn that holy anchoret for an impostor! Ay, ye may turn up the white of yere een like a magpie in the measles; did ye no, under pretence of mending the wark of that demon, called the simoom, drug him there as he stands, wi' the wicked balsam of Idris! and then carry him through a superannuate passage into the desert, and whig him awa on the back of twa dromedaries. Gad! but ye'll never deceive poor trusting Christians in yon houff mair; I left our hads blowing it up to the moon and the seven stars, and e'en tracked you through the sand, and here am I, dry as the wilderness, and as hungry as the hyenas, that followed at our heels, and put fear and mettle into us baith."

The anchoret replied gravely, "The flight of Roldan from the Gate of the Desert to the Rose of the Wilderness has not been equalled since the church of Loreto flew away roof and rafter from Cælo-Syria to Italy. The flight of Mohammed was but typical of it; I have spoken it, I, whom men call Walid, the son of Ayto-Aylo of Engeddi."

"Son of Tibbie Tackets!" exclaimed Davie Gellock, giving the anchoret such a slap on the back as wellnigh prostrated him. "Dod! that a queer dress, and a burly beard and beggar's duds, should have made me close mine een on ane whom matron and maiden ken by the name of Galloway Tam! You holy! what says the fule sang on that head!"

The anchoret seemed disposed to resist the acquaintance which Davie claimed with him; a sarcastic smile from Spratt decided the matter; and he sighed and said, "We had forgotten our early follies, and expected not to be reminded of the levities of youth in the days of our repentance."

"Behold him now," said Davie, "a douce man and a holy; never a sicker saunt without a sound fa'—and that's Galloway gospel."

"Now, my friends," said Morison, "you have taken more interest in me than I thank you for—will you tell me what all this means? you may mean well, but you have taken an odd way to show it."

"That's well said," muttered Davie: "better fleech fools than fight wi' them, and I have some notion that baith Galloway Tam and Brose Sprott are scrimp to the gauge, as the masons say; winna stand the rammer, as the pavers observe."

The looks of both darkened as Morison spoke. "Mean!" exclaimed the anchoret, "know ye not what we mean; we have brought you here less a prisoner than out of regard for your soul; we found you leagued with profane infidels, and our hearts yearned to redeem you while the eleventh hour was on the stroke."

"Nay, Walid," said Sprott, "we have but fulfilled what has been ordained: did not she whom we delight to obey—even she whom men call Lily of the Desert—did she not declare, that unless she spoke to this youth he would be a miserable man? The reign of philosophy is at hand, cries the French infidel, but superstition is tottering, and Scripture fulfilling, say I."

"I say amen to that!" responded Walid, "but let us bring this captive to the queen; she will lay her commands upon him; and who knows but he may prove that predestined one for whom she is reserving the snow-white steed that has never known a rider."

"Oh man of a darkened vision!" exclaimed Sprott; "the predestined one is not of this world; will not the clouds open and the anointed one descend on a sunbeam, and seated on the steed, gallop east and west, and north and south, diffusing light among the nations, and saying unto pain, and grief, and care, and want, depart, and causing joy, and gladness, and worth, and virtue to return and abide for ever and aye!"

"And when is all this to happen?" inquired Davie.

"It may be to-morrow," replied Walid.

"It may come to pass in an hour," said Sprott.

"Then have wi' you!" cried Davie. "Gosh! how glad am I that I had the courage to dare the accursed desert. Losh! what fun there will be; what joukings ahint the hallan; what rinnin round the ricks at e'en; what ladses sangs and lasses skirls!—and will life be prolonged?"

"Ye will live for ever," replied both.

"Na, now that's grand—that's maist ower mickle o' a gude thing—but wha's this now—wha's this? Here's the snaw-white steed, and here's the Lily of the Desert hersel!—she's a wee touch eldern for me, though—and by the wild glance o' her ee, there's a bee in her bannet lug; but fend ma care."

The Lily of the Desert approached; her coming struck an awe into Morison's companions, which they expressed by uncovering their heads and bowing, as if in the presence of something more than mortal. She came accompanied by

the tribe over whom she held sway, and rode a milk-white steed, sprung from that noble one on which Mohammed accomplished his flight from Mecca; one of the same colour and race was led by her side. Her locks were fastened by a fillet of gold and gems; her robe was of white silk; she wore sandals of silver, and though of a noble countenance, there was that ominous sparkle in her eye, alluded to by honest Davie, which accounted for her power over a superstitious people, who believe that aberration of mind proceeds from immediate intercourse with the Deity. While Morison was endeavouring to recollect where he had seen her face before, she advanced and addressed him.

"Son of Lord Roldan," she said, "you are welcome! I foretold your coming; and my people brought you hither, as it was ordained and as I commanded. Though you warred against my tribe, I have sent for you that you may become one of us. Here the shame of your birth is unfelt; man is, under God, his own maker; and the brave, the high souled, and noble minded, resemble things divine most, and are all but worshipped. Come and dwell in this Eden of the wilderness; for you a fleet steed shall ever be decked: for your feet, the spiced bath shall ever be ready; perfumes will be wafted about your couch; and we shall bring hither those whom you love, and thy people shall be my people!" She looked round when she had done speaking; all heads were bowed, and a low indistinct murmur of approbation was heard on all sides.

"Take her offer, Morison, take it," whispered Davie, "ye will never get a better; Howeboddum itself is but a pouring jungle o' stanes compared to this Eden."

Morison would have spoken, but the Lily of the Desert motioned him to silence, saying, "Follow us to our judgment seat."

"Gosh!" muttered Davie, "if that's her palace," looking at the temple, "what maun her throne be made of!—burning and beaten gowd, I'se warrant."

She stopped at a little mound, placed herself on a seat of turf; a cross of stone stood behind; a small spring leaped up cool and silvery on her left hand, and a thistle all in flower grew on her right. "Behold," she said, "three mystic things and full of meaning. The cross tells me to be meek, and just, and merciful; the fountain speaks of what is immortal, for there it springs for ever and ever; while the thistle is emblematic of my kingdom on earth. Children of the Desert, look!" She plucked a head from the thistle, and puffed off a portion of the down. "As that down carries through the air the seed of flowers as lovely as the parent one, so will the belief that is in us fly towards the east, and like that wild flower seed take root and prosper." She gave a second puff. "That is for the west, see how the breeze

wafts it! I accept the omen." She gave a third puff. "That is for the frozen and philosophic north; alas! even as yonder bird seized the seed as it flew, and swallowed it, so will that region, fruitful in schism and doubt, do for a while with my blessed doctrine." She gave a fourth puff. "That is for the south; lo! see how gently the wind bears it along! that is typical. Shout, my children; for should we not rejoice when God and nature alike manifest their good-will towards us!" They all shouted.

"For you," she said to Morison, "worthy son of an unworthy man, hearken! From the Rose of the Wilderness there is no escape without my permission; even the wings of the eagle or of that not fabulous bird, the roc, would fail to bear you away, unless I willed it. Be patient—be content—nay, rejoice—you are on God's own errand; it was written on your forehead in the moment of the birth pang that you were to come here. There is a holy purpose in it; and there is an earthly purpose: the former have I already intimated, the latter, too, shall be revealed to you. I shall say but this, to detain you to the fulness of time; go and be miserable; abide, and be happy! Thomas, whose other name is Walid, and Sprott, whom we call Heikel, abide with him, and see that he lacketh for naught that his heart desires. But first send unto me our convert, the faithful Salame, even he who witnessed the wonders of the Lord on the deep and has come to testify of them on land."

CHAPTER XIV.

Freedom all solace to man gives,
He lives at ease that freely lives.

BARBOUR.

MORISON felt that the Lily of the Desert, as the tribe called her, was for the present mistress of his destiny. "Has her face," he said, "appeared to me in a dream, or is it one of the delusions of fancy? Surely those eyes have glanced on me before, and in a land far from the arid deserts!" He questioned her Scottish companions; but Heikel escaped in proverbs, and Walid retired into the mystic and figurative language of the East; both seemed resolved to throw no light upon the cloud in which she had wrapped herself. Her own words were equally mystical; she expected a new religious revelation and a second coming of the Saviour, and believed that he would descend from heaven and elect her for his companion in the kingdom of glory, which was to be estab-

lished on the earth. She acknowledged, too, that she loved the house of Roldan, and was mistress of its fate.

"Morison," she said, "I can exalt thee; I can tell thee a tale that would bring thee back to life wert thou in the very gates of death. This tale will be told, and that soon, for the hour comes and the day approaches—but we must await the time of the Most High—not a sparrow falls to the ground, nor can a man arise, without his permission." Clearer words than these it was not her pleasure to utter.

Nor was this mystery the worst; Morison was imprisoned by the burning desert, and watched by the zealous Walid and the faithful Salame, they attended on all his steps and lent an ear to all his words. The former talked without ceasing, and watched while he talked; the latter never opened his lips, but his eyes were ever on the alert, and he saw all, without seeming to see anything. Though united in this, those worthies had no good will towards each other; they shunned all intercourse: when their eyes met they glimmered with anger, and their hands unwittingly strayed to pistol and dagger. For both, Heikel of the Moat of Orr had the most supreme contempt; and of the three, Davie Gellock averred that "Heikel is a hypocrite, Walid an impostor, a serpent that tries to seem an eel; and as for Salame, he aye turns frae me his glass green een, and mutters to my questions, 'Ulla Kerim!' whilk is as much as to say, Davie, yere an ass. I jalouse he's waur than them baith." But worse or better, Salame was the chief confidant of the chieftainness: his burly beard, shaggy brows, and moveless lips, were ever at her side; to him were intrusted the archives of the tribe, and that discomposed Walid most of all.

Though fretting was idle, neither Morison nor Davie could avoid it. "Here we are," said the latter, "like stalled steeds living on winnowed corn; yet there's a clog at our feet and a halter about our necks. I have watched the desert to escape, but hell opens ae mouth as soon as it shuts another; the simoom comes dancing like a will-o'-wisp ae hour, and the deil turns up the sand wi' his red-hot hoof the tither, and ye might as weel try to wade through Tophet."

"There is much truth in what ye say, David," replied Morison, "but here comes our friend Walid."

"Friend," grumbled the other, "a hollow ane; no steel to the bane; has a tarry loaf; he loves this haveral lady, as the sow loves the shade of the fruit tree in a windy day for the apples that's shaken down—ye comprehend. I whiles think of becoming a dwaller here mysel': I can see quere sights; I can preach a little; I can prophesy too, on a pinch: but then what will hinder our lady frae wakening in her senses some braw May morning and finding all of us out? Sae that cock winna fight—but mum—here he comes—here

he comes! Aweel, Morison, ye are welcome to your ain opinion, but I aver that a simoom is only a mair civilized will-o'-wisp. Now, Walid, whom the profane call Galloway Tam, is the destined hour, as ye call it, come—may we wag out of the wilderness?"

"I am, alas! not holy enough," answered Walid, mournfully, "to read the stars, and interpret the voices which are heard in the winds of the desert. I fast, pray, give alms, and prostrate myself in the sands, but no hand from the cloud, nor voice from the sky, is vouchsafed to me, as they are to that holy one, whom men call the Lily of the Desert. Blessed be the hour in which I left that barren region called Galloway; here are the true treasures, the rubies, the sapphires, the precious stones, and the refined gold."

"Lord, man!" exclaimed Davie, "will ye no help a poor countryman to some of these treasures; to you, gowd guineas can be nae better than sclate stanes, seeing that your inheritance is in the new Jerusalem; but the sunny side of Carsafairn Hill wad content me; and some of the treasures ye speak of wad help me to that."

"The wealth I speak of is symbolical, ye sinner," said Walid, "but a truce with idle talk; the hour of your departure is nigh, and here comes the Wondrous One to say so herself." And he put his hands before his eyes, and bowed humbly as she approached.

Her step was measured; her look was wild, and she seemed agitated more than usual. "I come," said the Lily of the Desert, addressing herself to Morison, "to speak, not darkly, but clearly; not mystically, but as fallible creatures speak. Thou art not yet permitted to be adopted among the chosen; a voice came to me at the dead of the night, saying, 'Sleepest thou, my daughter?' and I said, 'What is thy will?' and the voice answered and said, 'Why abides the stranger within thy porch? There is blood on his hands; let him depart with to-morrow's sun, lest tarrying he die; let him await his destiny in the green and dropping west.' And I said, 'Thy will shall be done, oh voice! for thou comest from above, though thy tongue is like the tongue of my servant, Salame.'"

The face of Morison grew bright; "Lady," he answered, "though you have brought me hither by a wile, and detained me by force, yet I have to thank you for the gentleness with which I have been treated."

"By wile and by force!" replied she, "both were needful. Hadst thou been left to thyself the angel of death would have stricken thee, and the wild beasts of the wilderness held a banquet on thy body. I have saved thee, but it is not written that I shall do more now. Go, and await my coming in the west. Listen! the Child of Destiny has been foiled in his march of conquest in the east; the veil has been removed

from his eyes, and he is gone where fate calls him, even to the task of overturning the thrones of Europe; a prosperous breeze fills his sails, and France, as with one tongue, will welcome him. Go, son of Lord Roldan, go; it is written that we shall meet again, and meet in gladness and joy. But, lo! what messenger is this that comes with tidings from the desert? It is the demon! Evil One, I fear thee not, I am prepared."

A lured flame glimmered at a little distance; and the simoom came sweeping along the crackling sand, and approached the group of which the chieftainess was the principal. All bowed their heads, and some, more prudent, fell on their faces; she alone was undismayed; as the vapour came rolling on she threw her spear against it. The glittering steel head seemed to melt as it mingled with the meteor, the long shaft quivered and blazed, and a report was heard like the crack of a carbine. The vapour rose suddenly into the air and vanished, and the lance fell at her feet.

"Behold," she exclaimed, "the powers of hell cannot prevail against me! That evil spirit, which but for me had slain my people, and scorched up my Rose of the Wilderness, has fled from my might. Saw ye not how grim he grew, and heard ye not the groan with which he departed? This blessed weapon has done a good deed for my people."

"Behold the steel head is stained in the inklike ichor of the demon's body!" said Walid, "and the shaft is singed with the fire which accompanies things evil. The smell which this holy weapon emits is of brimstone."

"I say, Galloway Tam," whispered Davie, "where was your faith? You fell on your face, and trembled as the demon drew near; I doubt ye."

"I fell on my face," said Walid, "because I was unworthy of witnessing a miracle."

"I have shown thee a touch of my power," said the Lily of the Desert to Morison, "there yet remains something for me to do; I have spoken darkly, young man, because I am not permitted to utter to thee words of light; I will now show thee the confidence which I have in thy honour. Come hither, Salame, and give me the Roldan casket."

That demure functionary stepped forward, and held up between his hands, while he bowed his head meekly, a small casket of gold. She took it, and giving it to Morison, said, "What this casket contains comes from thy own isle; open it not till the hour of despair arrives; it holds a charm capable of bringing thee back from the grave. Son of Lord Roldan, do you promise to obey me?"

"I promise to obey you, lady," answered Morison.

"That is enough—your word is sufficient. Yet, oh!" she continued, in a perfectly natural and very moving tone, "I am loath to part with you; in my hours of darkness you would

console and comfort me; you would drive away those demons of dread and doubt who are seldom far from me; and you would keep me from mistaking accidents in nature for miracles, and hypocrites for men pious and upright. Stay! why should I not let light in upon thy darkness even now? Why should I not dissipate the cloud; why not open the casket, and make hearts happy?"

"Stay," said Salame, who had not yet spoken, "the hour is not come. I see something in yonder cloud; it is the form of the Holy One. He is clothed in white; a tiara of gold is on his brow; he holds the fate of the world in one hand, and a blazing planet in the other."

All looked upward, including Morison, who saw nothing, but marvelled much what turn this strange scene was about to take.

"I see him also," said the Lily of the Desert, "and I should have seen him sooner than the pious Salame, had not carnal affection blinded my sight. It is enough; I am rebuked. Go your ways, son of Lord Roldan; I hold you to your promise. Go; my people will escort you in safety wherever you desire." She turned from him and was seen no more.

To the land of Egypt Morison turned his steps. The horse on which he rode was of Nubian breed, beautiful in form, agile in all its movements, and seemed to be acquainted even with the wishes of its rider.

"It is a present from the Lily of the Desert," said Walid, "and might carry the Child of Destiny himself; but the noble animal would refuse the burden of one whose thoughts are on blood."

"Your horses are as sensitive as your tribe are, Walid," said Morison. "But now we are alone, and Salame out of earshot; let me ask what can induce a wise and a shrewd man like yourself to keep up the delirium of an unhappy lady, and see sights in the clouds, and hear voices in the air which no one else can hear or see?"

Walid hesitated for a minute's space before he answered. "You have been so long the comrade of infidel philosophers, that you doubt all and believe nothing. Alas! my son, I am neither wise nor shrewd. I am as one in the porch, awaiting the voice to cry 'Come in.' I am an humble follower of that rapt and inspired one, whom thou callest the unhappy. Thinkest thou that I came with her from her native Galloway, and set up my staff with her in this desert because of her gold and her diamonds. No, thou hast mistaken the character of him whom men call Walid the Simple."

Having said this he closed his lips and moved forward in silence. Half the day was done when Walid turned about suddenly, and said, "We have cleared nigh a hundred miles of parched desert; look, for thy eyes are young, and tell me

if thou seest a well of living water ; I am faint and my steed is thirsty."

"A well of living water !" exclaimed Davie Gellock, "seek oil in a stone ; roasted apples in a simoom ; dates and figs in a whirlwind."

"Seek for water, Mirza !" exclaimed Walid, springing off his horse ; "go, seek for the well, my friend, and let me know when thou findest it." Mirza ran a little way, snuffed the air, putting his distended nostrils close to the hot sand, then galloped forward about a quarter of a mile, pawed with his hoofs and neighed.

"He's a deil and nae horse," said Davie, "if he finds water there."

The children of the desert hurried forward ; removed the sand, dug down a yard or so, and seizing a ring of iron, raised a broad stone, beneath which lay a small pool or spring of pure water. - "Thou shalt taste of it first, Mirza," said Walid, filling a large cup, which, after moving rapidly to and fro in the air, and lifting up the water with the palms of his hands, he presented to his horse, saying, "There, the wind has sweetened it—drink."

They refreshed themselves, replaced the stone, smoothed down the sand, and continued their journey. "That blessed well," said Walid, "is unknown to all the tribes of the desert save our own. Had the accursed Mamelukes known of it, they would have come and plucked our Rose of the Wilderness. It must remain a secret even with thee, my son. It was here that the Lily of the Desert waxed faint, and desired water from the spring. 'Oh, Walid !' cried she, 'I am dying for thirst, my heart has strange misgivings. Is yon a cloud which I see, or is it the promised One on a milk-white steed ?' 'It is the Holy One,' I answered, and held the cup to her lips ; and she drank, and murmured out, 'It is sweet as the springs of my native Galloway, where the child of my bosom dwells.'"

"Child of her bosom !" exclaimed Morison, "a daughter, saidst thou ?" and he turned on Walid a face in which hope and fear had strangely mingled their colours.

"I said not so," answered Walid, "I spoke mystically ; you, my son, are unaccustomed to other language, save that of this vain world."

"Well, be it so," said Morison, "but surely you will not pretend that this lady is a figure of speech."

"I pretend nothing," replied Walid ; "I know only that I am a creature loaded with sin ; what the inspired One is, judge ye from what ye have seen. Did she not conquer the demon, that dwells in the simoom ? did she not tell the discomfort of your god, Napoleon ? did she not give you a casket containing the words of fate ? Go to, my son ! Quea-

tion the wind: demand an answer from the stars!" He closed his lips, slackened his bridle, and fell back thrice the length of his horse.

The silent Salame seemed to wish to ride alone, but Davie, who could not be mute, and, moreover, had suspicions about the character of that worthy, forced his company upon him. He had already ascertained that Salame was a seafaring man, and a native of Scotland, and resolving to know more, abandoned all appearance of questioning: fell back upon simplicity, and succeeded.

"Weel, now, Salame," said Davie, "a sea of sand's a bonnie thing; a pillar of that same a sublime thing, and that evil spirit the simoom, a terrible thing: yet I prefer the bonnie green hills of auld Scotland to all such beauties. And then to be buried in a furrow of fiery sand wi' a hyena for a bedral: deil hae me then, if I wadna sooner lie under a gowany turf in the kirkyard of Drumshool!" Something there was in this which touched the other: a pillar of burning sand which sprinkled them with arid dust just then passed, distant not a stonecast, while a hyena howled within gunshot—giving life to Davie's picture of wo and desolation.

"You have spoken truth, young man," said Salame, "such things are now and then present to my own thoughts; but I am bound to abide where I am for a time: the bee that buzzes in our lady's bonnet hug may one day remind her of bonnie Borgue, and wile her home to her estate and her daughter. David, can ye tell me if the lands of Grupentauket are to be sold? they lie in a land where I hope to spend pleasant days."

"Wha the deevil can this be!" muttered Davie to himself. "He looks owre the door for a Macdougall, speaks owre sture for a Macculloch: but whaever he is, he's safe within that Carsfairn Hill of heathery beard. Ou, the lands of Grupentauket," he said aloud, "will be in the market soon: they are kept back by a rotten whang, by the thread of a spider's web: the laird thereof is fou seven days in the week, as if sax were na enow for any honest purpose. But I'm saying, Salame, it will require a mint of money; I saw that auld haud-the-grip, Roger Saufley, pacing the length and breadth thereof ae May morning. If it's no worth sax thousand pounds, a thief's no wordy of a rape, or damme, then! as dear Dick Corsbane was wont to word it."

Salame glanced his eye suspiciously on Davie, but he saw nothing to vindicate doubt, "Grupentauket's mine, then," he said. "Now, David—what is your other name? ay, Gellock—ye seem a sensible lad and a discreet, wherefore cast ye in your lot with this harumscarum young man: perhaps you imagine that he will be Lord of Roldan: I know who can draw a thorn into that slap—he will be bastard Morison till the day of doom: I have said it."

"Weel, Salame, now," answered Davie, under his breath, "I follow this lad just because I canna get a better to follow; but bide a wee, fortune may turn up a bright spoke in her unsteady wheel for me yet: ye'll be in lack of a carefu' hand when ye are laird of Grupentauket."

"Indeed will I, David; but bide ye for the present where ye are: I shall manage matters discreetly. Lord Roldan has a son, but neither father holiness the kirk, nor mother wisdom the law will acknowledge him: so he's nobody; now should any one find his lordship drowned in the Elfin liun, or Carswaddo glen, some summer morning, then down sits our Lily of the Desert in Lady Winifred's chair, and sees visions and hears voices in the winds, and scatters her rents as November scatters her snaws."

Davie, with a look which in simplicity seemed the dove, said, "Weel, the like o' that, now! but will ye speak to me this way? A kind of rumour's rife that Morison's mother secured her fame by means of marriage lines—now, should sic a document chance to cast up, and they say some sure hand hands it, then down tumbles your braw fabric and smothers poor Davie, eh!"

"Acutely remarked, curiously observed, Davie, my friend," answered Salame; "but the marriage testimony is in a sure hand, too sure ever to make it serviceable to Morison. But keep your mind to yourself. Yonder! behold the smoke of the flesh pots of Egypt, and see the tents of the philosophic infidels of France. Farewell."

Morison turned to his friends of the desert, and bestowing a benediction in the welcome guise of gold, said, "Farewell, and may God be with you! Tell the Lily of the Desert I shall be faithful to my promise: that I shall regard her precious casket as something divine, and pray, while I look at it, never to need the charm which it contains."

"Contains!" muttered Salame, within his beard, and at the same moment bestowed a look on Davie, which made that worthy expand his eyes to the diameter of crown pieces, and open his mouth wide enough to swallow a bushel of dust. On these words they parted: the sons of the desert retired at the gallop, leaving a long curling trail of dust behind them in the air.

As soon as they were at a distance, Davie burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, interrupted only by exclamations of "Davie's no blin'; Davie's no deaf!"

"Surely, my friend," said Morison, "you have lost your wits."

"Are ye sure ye havena tint yere ain, Morison? I'll try ye—wha's Salame? There's a poser! answer me that."

"Some hypocritical scoundrel or another."

"Oh! a blind body might see that, but wha the deevil is

he, that I should say sae—have ye never seen him afore? there's a fair question."

"Not to my knowledge."

"Whew!" cried Davie, "wha's dull o' the uptank, now? did ye no ken our auld kindly cutthroat friend Dick Corbane?"

"By Heaven!" exclaimed Morison, "you are right! I thought I knew his eye: but the long beard and wild dress baffled my examination."

"That's because," said Davie, "ye aye spoke in yere grand Dominie Milligan kind of English. Wi' a mouthfu' of cannie Galloway Scotch I gat at the man's heart: but though I jaloused him, I never could make him out fully, till he gae me ane o' his gullows glowres just as he spurred awa: my een's no returned to their proper diameter yet."

"There is a mystery in all this," said Morison. "How did the wretch escape from the burning rafters of his house in Hispaniola? what is he doing here in the twin of this lady? he cannot be here for good. And such a lady, too! beautiful she is still: and wise, perhaps, once—nay, is so now and then, she is unhappy, too, and in her fits of melancholy speaks of a dead husband and a living child."

"Truly it's no ill token what brings the kites to the slaughter-field," said Davie; "the lady's rich, her hand's open: and honest Salame and pious Walid superintend her expenditure. I am tauld that she fell into a religious melancholy, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, resolved to retire into the desert, as the anchorets did of old, and finally foregathered with the tribe, of which she is now the head, a sept half heathen and half Christian. But she says she will come west soon, and sae we shall likely see her, and then we can haul Corbane owre the coals: for I think ye wadna dream of going back and daring him in his own deserts."

"We have had enough of the sand pillar and the simoom," replied Morison.

A picket of French soldiers suddenly burst from some date trees, and commanded them to surrender; but no sooner did they recognise General Roldan than they set up a shout which brought hundreds and thousands from the camp; the men crowded around him, and could hardly be hindered from taking him off his horse and carrying him in triumph.

"We have got a leader now, who not only can gain a victory, but improve it. Long live Roldan!" They again offered to take him from his horse.

"Lads," said Davie, "the general disnae like to be carried on twa-footed creatures; but I hae nae misgivings—carry me gin you will."

"Ha! our old comrade, David de Gelkoch," exclaimed a dozen voices; "welcome back; we have not had a hearty laugh since you left us; a thousand times have we tried to

tell your jocose stories, and sing de charming song, called de Dronken Vife of Gillovay, she vas von trimmer."

"Citizens and gentlemen of France," said Davie, bowing east and bowing west, and giving his right hand to one and his left hand to another, "I have not been unmindful of what is required for the messroom and the bivouac; I have learned how to eat rump steaks with pepper cut from a living cow: and also some capital jokes, and humorous stories, kenned only to the loose-breeched lads of the wilderness. I hae gaped and laughed at them till I swallowed a pillar o' sand; but ye shall be partakers in good season. Could ony o' ye wyse a drap of brandy my way—the sjnoom travelled lately down my thrapple, and the road's gay and parched." A dozen flasks were held up at once.

"I would offer you mine," said a grim mustached cuirassier, "but Napoleon condescended to drink out of my canteen, and a meaner mouth shall never touch it!" A loud shout of approbation was raised at this.

"God has taken away Napoleon, and the devil has left us a Menou," muttered another veteran of Italy, "and we will all go to the pit without lantern and candle; but General Roldan is somebody!"

"Roldan will not be long ours," growled another veteran. "Will Napoleon wilfully want his right hand? No, and here comes Menou to tell him so."

We might claim the privilege which the sun and wind take, and visit whatever clime we please in a moment; but we abide by the line of our narrative, and only take the liberty of closing our eyes when the road is uninteresting, or the incidents of little moment, to open them wide when we arrive in a land of incident and adventure. The voyage is achieved, and we see before us a fine country, in the pleasant season of the year. That continuous greensward sprinkled with flowers, speaks of Europe; these vineyards might intimate Italy, did not that battalion of citizen soldiers, with a couple of eagles, and tri-coloured cockades in their hats, speak of France as plainly as with a tongue. Yes, we are in ancient France; but her bounds are yet to be widened, if we credit the gossip of these hurrying soldiers.

"We must make our horses smoke," said a leading officer, "if we don't wish the first consul to gain all before we arrive. Oh, for the horse of the desert!"

"Our general," said another officer, "will be up in time for the second cut: sore did wind and waves try to keep asunder Desaix and Napoleon; but it was not to be."

"And yet," said the other, "it would have been as kind of the waves to have tried the contest a little longer; I don't like the wild haste and the wild looks of Desaix: he seems a doomed man."

"Hush!" replied the other, "these superstitious fears are

unworthy of thee. See! here is one who hurries onward in the same breakneck way."

"Ay!" responded the other, "but there is no cloud on his brow: he travels with the sunlight of victory in his glance. By the soul of Napoleon, it is General Roldan!"

With an acknowledgment of head and eye to this recognition, Morison galloped past.

"Let us not be sparing of the spur," he thus urged his companion; "there is neither wind nor tide here to keep us back; Napoleon has dropped from the Alps upon the Austrians, like an avalanche."

"Ay, ay," said Davie, "and gin he capture Italy a second time, he will be a greater sule than I take him to be, if he disna keep it to himsel; but wha can this be?"

"Ha, Desaix!" and "Ha, Roldan!" exclaimed two voices at once. "What! escaped from the amorous snares of the Lily of the Desert? Well, welcome, whether loosed by love or force, stratagem or entreaty. But let us drink and go; the din of artillery is in my ears, and the shouts of victory—"

"Ye hear mair than I am glad of, General Desaix," said Davie, touching his hat, "it's no sonsie to imagine sic things; I hope ye're no sey-bespoke, as the vulgar say."

"Ha! my old acquaintance David!" said Desaix, smiling: "often have I listened to your quaint stories, when none of the bivouac knew me. You deserve to be promoted. He has one quality of a leader at least, who can gladden the hearts of his comrades, and charm away reflection after a hard march or a bloody battle."

They continued their journey and entered Italy. The cornfields were trampled down by the infantry; over the vineyards the cavalry of the conqueror and conquered had passed; while the roofless houses, the homeless dogs, and the wretched women and children, huddled under hedges, squalid and hungry, touched the hearts of the two gallant soldiers.

"Our old comrade," said Desaix, "has won all: France fell at his feet; he will bring Austria to her knees; he has gained a victory already; yet he writes to me as one that has got nothing. Thus it is—we are never happy. What muse you on, citizen general!"

"I am musing on your words, Desaix," answered Morison. "When France fell at Napoleon's feet, I hope he permitted her to rise and assume her natural look of independence; I have heard that he already lords it over his fellows more than a free republic can permit. He will find there are some who will not endure this."

"Ay, Moreau, and Carnot, and Roldan, and Desaix," replied the other; "but I fear this republic we have laboured so hard to raise will prove a frail structure; Moreau wants the fiery resolution to enable him to cope with Napoleon."

Carnot is a mathematical dreamer : Roldan is too lofty in his notions ; and as for Desaix, 'tis no matter what metal he is of—for, let me whisper it, he is doomed to die ere yon sun now rising has fulfilled his course !”

Morison gazed on his comrade : his eye was touched with an unwonted light ; there was a flush on either cheek ; he seemed taller than usual. At this moment a trumpet sounded ; the morning mist was slowly rolled away, and on the plain beneath they beheld the army of Napoleon hurrying to occupy a village and possess themselves of a brook which covered their front.

“The enemy must be hid in yonder cloud,” said Morison.

“You have said well, Roldan. See, the cloud is parted, and now for the thunder !” As Desaix spoke, the Austrian army, passing the impetuous Bormida, burst through the mist, and rushing on the right and centre of the French forced them rudely back, strewing the plain over which they were driven with dead bodies. Napoleon was not dismayed ; his left stood firm, sustained by the stubborn valour of Lannes ; the centre and right sheltered themselves behind his division. Murat, by headlong charges of cavalry, sought to cover the retreat now become necessary, for Lannes was all but pushed from his position by bayonet and sabre.

“My time is come, Roldan,” exclaimed Desaix, whose division now entered the plain of Marengo ; he flew to their head, and saying “Follow me !” advanced through the hail of a hundred pieces of artillery. He fell in the moment of charging. Morison looked sadly at him as he lay, but the dying hero waved him onward with a smile. “Let me die here,” he said faintly to two of his men, who wished to carry him from the field. “How goes the fight ?—that shout was a French shout, and it tells of victory.” His head sunk on his breast ; his fingers relinquished the sword ; he expired with the name of Napoleon and a faint smile on his lips—for Napoleon himself knelt at his side.

“A better friend, or a truer soldier,” said the general, “never looked on the sun ; thy virtue was the old Roman virtue ; thou hadst the simplicity of Brutus with the faculties of Cæsar : there is none left like thee ! for Roldan, my hero of the school of Ossian—” He looked suddenly up—a figure covered with blood and dust from plume to spur stood before him.

“The Austrians are driven over the Bormida,” said the stranger, “but what is victory compared to the loss of thee, thou pattern of all excellence ! thou noble soldier ! thou virtuous citizen !”

“Ha ! General Roldan,” exclaimed Napoleon, “did I lose thee but to find thee a victor ? Speak to me of Egypt. I have much to ask.”

“Egypt is lost,” said Morison, “there was no Desaix to charge in the moment of need, and turn defeat into victory.

Kleber is dead, and Menou is incompetent—it needs no prophet to foretell the result.”

“Thy tidings are heavy,” said Napoleon. “Thy valour to-day has been great—but thy flight from Egypt—didst thou say that Kleber is dead?”

“Yes,” replied Morison.

“Then, General Roldan, why did you forsake the afflicted army? Menou is nobody.”

“Say on,” answered Morison.

“Why did you leave my brave Frenchmen? Here are enough of gallant spirits without your aid. Roldan, you have displeased me.”

“So I see,” said the other, “but I left Egypt in obedience to the orders of my general; Kleber was then well: I heard of his death when I reached France. But I came not here to fight, citizen consul.”

“Don’t citizen consul me, sir!” exclaimed Napoleon. “If you came not hither to fight, then what came you here for? you have fought, and that well—I may at least say that.”

“I fought, citizen consul—I believe the term at present is right—because I could not see an ancient comrade fall without a wish to avenge him.”

“Well, well,” said Napoleon, with an impatient wave of his hand, “I see I must relent—there is a marshal’s baton in prospect for thee—no distant date.”

“Napoleon,” replied Morison, “I became a soldier to right human nature; and to level all rank save that conferred by Heaven. Here I find you possessed of power, which, however much you deserve it, is destructive of liberty. Step by step have you advanced victor over the armies of your enemies, as well as over the freedom of France. With you I can act no longer; but when your hour of adversity comes—when the nations you have outraged band themselves against you and prevail—you will find me at your side ready to die with you or prepared to live.”

“Go, my friend, then,” said Napoleon, giving Morison his hand, “fulfil your destiny.”

CHAPTER XV.

Set but my right hand free, he says,
And put my brade sword in the same;
And he's no in Stirling town the day,
Dare tell the tale to Hugh the Græme.

Old Ballad.

WHILE Morison was on his way from Italy, matters of moment were transpiring in his native glen. Lord Roldan, who had lately arrived from abroad, confined himself to his own castle by day, but at night he was to be seen wandering on the lonely shore, on the lonely hills, or in the deep and solitary glens of his grounds. It was imagined that the penance enjoined by the head of the church was a heavy one, and that his melancholy and troubled roamings were the result of religious rebuke. Those who thought so, knew not Lord Roldan; he held that religion was not made for spirits such as his, and had no right any more than power, to curb his inclinations and limit his desires. In short, he regarded all laws, divine and human, as excellent matters for the multitude in the way of bridle and spur; but not intended for the born governors and legislators of the earth, among whom he ranked himself.

There was sunshine in the castle in spite of the gloom of its lord. The Lady Rose was as much the delight of every one as Lord Roldan was the dread; the deserving and helpless found her a friend; but the fatherless and motherless were chief objects of her regard; while it was remarked that to all such Lord Roldan was slow in extending either grace or favour. On this the shrewd peasantry of the land made many comments.

"Na, but this waur nor a'!" cried one, on hearing that Lord Roldan had refused the free lease of a house to an orphan whose father had died in the wars; "it's a rebuke side-lens glented at Morison, puir fallow! but deil ma care; the day is nigh when wrath will rise aboon a' rule, and ye'll see public indignation plucking down the house of Roldan, as a bairn pous down it's bourack."

"Hout!" said another, "Lord Roldan's no sae muckle to be blamed after a'; ane tauld me that saw't, that he fleeced and prayed, and amaisht gude down on his knees to Morison's mother, to get her to own a marriage, and sae make her bairn a lord; but na, she was as stiff when she ought to have been yielding, as she was yielding when she ought to hae been stiff. But it's thought she would have succumbed, when wha should come in but the young man himself, with the devil of

stubbornness strong in him; Lord Roldan was not only refused, but scorned!"

"Ay, ay, pride will have a fa'," said a third district worthy, "it's sae written, and sae will it come to pass: and talking of fa's, here's ane that's like to catch a tumble—did ye ever see sae wild a pony? but nae wonder, that burden of rustling silks and dancing feathers would put ony creature mad. Haith! but madam sits weel."

When the rider came nearer the speaker changed his note. "Na, but I wish my tongue were blistered—this is our ain Lady Rose herself! Oh, madam, but we're glad to see you! ye're as dear to the heart as sunshine to the ee; John Geddes could worship the very mark o' your slipper heel, and as for me, I canna see the light o' day for ye." Lady Rose smiled, and seemed willing to ride on, but her palfrey was so accustomed to halt when the peasantry or the poor spoke, that it stood still and tossed its mane, and switched the air with its long streamer of a tail, and pawed up the gowans with its fore feet.

"Blessings on the sensible beast!" exclaimed the aforesaid John Geddes, "it has the wit o' a Christian: it kens that I hae a sma' boon to ask: only as muckle straw as will theek my bit house; it hasna been theeket since our poor lad Morison Roldan begged as muckle ait straw frae auld grippie of Fourmerkland—it was thought it would last for ever, as it came by miracle."

"What Morison had to beg," said Rose, with something between a blush and a smile, "I can give."

"Ay, but, Lady Rose," said another applicant, "Morison mawed my meadow, and Morison shure my corn; thae lang lily fingers can never do that, I trow, for a poor man of seventy-sax: I'll never see the like o' Morison again."

"Walter," replied Rose with much sweetness of manner, "your meadow shall neither go unmown, nor your corn unreaped, though my fingers are not so ready nor yet so able as those of my brother Morison."

She urged her pony, but the pony refused to move. Old Walter held up his hands, exclaiming, "Brother Morison!—oh, he's owned, and owned too by the proud name that may weel be proud of him; oh, Lady Rose! if the house of Roldan live in the land, it may date its life frae thae words of thine."

"Brother's a bonnie word, but cousin is as welcome, whiles," said John, "and it wad be difficult to prove that the lad's mair sib to ye. Od! when I saw him dancing wi' ye at Dalgarrack kirk, I said, saw onybody ever sic a couple! their very een speak o' kindred natures. Now what d'ye think witch Nanse muttered when she heard me: 'Ay, ay—as broken a ship has come to land—as distant things hae come together—it seems written in their looks.' I wish I could read it, Nanse, I whispered. She spake nae to the

point, but said, 'Some think her the daughter of Lord Roldan; but it wasnae wi' him, I trow, that her mither was acquainted, but wi' a wiser and a worthier. The day is coming wherein that tale will be tauld; there's some that ken, and some that dinna ken.'" Lady Rose sighed, and rode away.

They stood gazing after her. "'Deed now," said Walter, "for a' the suspicious words o' the witch Nanse, I hae my ain belief that the Lady Rose is neither mair nor less than the daughter o' Mary Morison hersel. The steds o' Lord Roldan's feet were often seen in the snaw; as weel as amang the flowers of the Elfin glen: it wasna for naught there was gowd scattered in her garden; nor is it for naught that our young lady rides almost ilka day to Mary's braw lodge, and sits and talks wi' her till the very bells o' Roldan tower are like to be cracked wi' ringing her hame."

"Hegh, man!" said Walter, "but ye have tauld me news; but d'ye ken they say that Morison is owre great a man now to regard the lordship of Roldan as a dignity; they say, he bearded my lord abroad, as if he had been his superior, and vowed to make the highest stane o' Roldan tower the lowest. I had this frae auld Madge Gellock hersel—proud is she that neer-do-weel Davie is her son."

In the midst of this discussion Nickie Neevison approached; she was not only half flying with haste, but sent her voice before her as she flew. "Ay, ye may crowd together there, ye feckless, fizenless carles!" exclaimed Nickie: "muckle good ye will render us in the hour of peril, when the Frenches will stand as thick on the land as ever ye saw rushes on Airnaumrie Moss. A vessel has just arrived wi' the tidings under pretence of bringing tea and brandy: yonder the bit bonnie craft lies in the bight at the falcon tower."

"Hegh, woman!" exclaimed all her three auditors at once, "but ye bring heavy tidings. The Frenches! oh, weary on them, for we will never learn their sorrowfu' tongue; d'ye ken if they are encouragers of sheep and bestial?"

"Encouragers o' sheep and bestial, ye brutes!" cried Nickie, "they're encouragers o' naught but the twa-edged sword. Na, na! they will cut the craigs of the old men and auld women, and make the young men and young women into bondmen and bondmaidens. Oh, sad! I wish I were but auld enough to die, for bondage is an awful thing; and then to hae ane's Sunday suit rumpled by a brown brute of a fellow, wha canna speak a word ane can understand. Howsever, I needna say nay to them that dianae understand my words. I maun be mute and thole, for Sandie Peden prophesied that the Mounseers wad fill all the land of Gallowa like the free air."

"But, oh, wha tauld ye, Nickie, woman?" said John Geddes.

"A sure hand," replied Nickie, "a gye sicker hand: ane wha thought I didna ken wha'spake; just as if Dick Cora-

bane could deceive me wi' his queer far-away speech, and a bit painted silk wrapped round his head. He wad hae gaured me trow that he was come a' the way frae Arabia-Pea-tree, just as if I didna ken him o' the auld. I could scarce keep my ten nails off him: he kidnapped our ain Morison, bonnie lamb!"

"And is that cruel limmer come back to the land?" exclaimed John: "I wonder he isnae afraid that the caverns will creep together when he's in them and crush him—that the towers of Roldan will forget that they have stood a thousand years, and drop on his head. I wish I were a cliff or a tree for his sake, that I might fa' on him; but he's be met wi' ere he leaves the land, as sure as I am in the body. Will we shoot the fox for carrying off a chicken, and will we no shoot the wretch that kidnaps our bairns? I'll clean out my black Queen Anne; it will do for Dickon first, and then for the Frenchers."

"He has owre many loops in his tail to be caught by you, John," said Nickie; "but gin ye want him ye'll find him about Carswaddo wood, near the Dead-man's-loup, or the Cairds cavern."

When Lady Rose reached the head of the Elfin glen, she looked on the beautiful and romantic spot, and thought of him to whom every tree and rock that rose before her was dear—who had often hunted the trouts in the stream, scaled the nests on the lofty cliffs, or awakened the echoes with the music of songs composed on his own untoward fate. She thought of these things, and remembered, too, the ready and intrepid spirit that had rescued her on that dread night when all seemed to have forsaken her.

"All the places dear to Morrison are dear to me," said Rose, half audibly, and hooking the bridle of her palfrey on the snag of a tree, she descended into the wild linn and soon stood in the entrance of the Elfin cavern. She drew aside the blooming curtain which half concealed the cave, and seating herself on the stone banch looked around with feelings which she sought not to disguise. "At this clear spring he drank"—and she stooped and tasted it. "On this cold seat he sat," and she looked anxiously at it; "and some of these figures he drew on the rock. Oh! here is his name, and inscribed, too, with that elegance which belongs to all he does." She started, for she thought she heard a sigh; on looking into the interior, there knelt Mary Morison: her hair unbound, and lying in an armful around her, with tears in her cheeks and strong tremblings in every limb.

"Mary—mother!" said Rose, approaching, "what ails you? Oh, I am glad that I am come!" and dipping her hands in the spring, she held them filled with water to Mary's lips, who drank and revived; and gathering up and restraining her hair and disordered dress, looked on her visitor

and said: "Know ye not, lady, that this is a dolorous day to me; to this cavern come I to cleanse my soul once a year: and, oh! that this may be the last, for it is an awful burden the consciousness of sin!"

"Be comforted, mother," said Lady Rose: "this deep sense of your failing, this contrite humiliation, a life of active goodness; surely these are atonements, and acceptable ones."

"Mother! oh, Rose, Rose! how can you—how dare you address me by that name!" exclaimed Mary. "To have erred once was sufficient to fill full the cup of misery without erring twice. Oh, thou gentle but foolish maiden!" And she took Rose in her arms and imprinted a burning kiss on her brow.

"I may be foolish," replied Rose; "but, Mary—since mother displeases you—rumour sometimes names me as your daughter."

"Rumour errs, my love," said Mary. "I would not have thee to be my child for all the sun shines on; but hush! didst thou not hear a sound?" "It was but the falling of a drop of water," said the Lady Rose; "but, oh! can you not tell me who my mother is? of my father speak not, since it pains you."

"Thy father's name, lady, gives no pain to me—but that was something; a groan, didst thou not hear it?"

Mary Morison listened with parted lips and ringlets shed back from her ears; her colour went and came: her breast heaved as if it would have burst through the silken laces with which it was bound; she arose, she motioned Lady Rose to follow, and with steps like those of a bird on the flower tops slipped out of the Elfin cavern, and hurrying down the glen, seemed not to reckon herself safe till she was within her own cottage.

This Rose regarded as arising from Mary's agitated state of mind, and seating herself beside her, inquired if she were better. "Better is not the word, lady," she replied, "I am safe. But, alas! of what use is it to save the flower whose bloom is about to be shed—to court the star about to be cast from the sky; I had a vision, or a dream if thou wilt, last night which requires no explanation. Oh, Morison, my beloved boy, wert thou but here!"

"I shall be to thee as a daughter," said Rose; "what did you see—what did you hear?"

"I will tell thee, lady," said Mary, "but take thy fair arms from about me, that my heart may have room to leap."

Mary Morison glanced anxiously around, and then said: "I felt feverish all day—a fit that always precedes this sad seventeenth of June. At night I could not go to bed, but sat down in my chair watching the light of the stars in the sky, and the fire on the hearth, and hearkening to the trilling of the stream. My mind wandered to him that is sel-

dom from my thoughts, and when I considered the fame he had gained, and the glory he had achieved, I said, Mary, comfort thyself; thy dishonour is become an honour, and thy noble boy almost justifies thy fault. And then I thought of his childish days, and how he used to seek honeycombs for me, and wild cherries and burn-trouts; and then I thought he was a bairn in my arms, and that his little eager lips were busy in my bosom. I closed mine eyes with delight of the recollection.

"Soon the scene changed. I thought it was the dead hour of night; that I was sitting alone on the threshold of Glangarnock kirk, and that a supernatural light streamed out at a door and window. And I arose and walked in: I saw no one present, nor heard I any sound. I thought if spirits of the departed exist they will surely be here. And two candles burned in the pulpit: two burned above the seat of shame, and two burned in the western door; and as I marvelled what this might mean, I beheld a woman in a winding-sheet, standing on the repentance stool, and what was the head appeared without eyes or hair; yet I thought her eyes saw, and that a strange light was in them, and I shuddered, for I saw that she resembled me; and as I looked on her, a figure in a shroud, not snow-white like the other, but dabbled with blood that yet reeked, entered at the eastern door, and said, with a low faint voice that gurgled in the throat, 'Who calls on me?' I shuddered violently, for it was the voice of Lord Roldan. And one whom I saw not, said from the pulpit, 'Thou art called by God; obey him, child of sin!' The figure seemed about to speak, but the pavement gaped and swallowed him up. I tried to run and gaze on the spot where he sunk, but my feet refused to move; a faintness came over me, and when I recovered, I felt as if ice had been poured through my veins. What thinkest thou of all this, lady! I dare not call it a dream."

"I think of it," replied Rose, "what I think of every dream, and yet I have dreamed what has come to pass too."

"Ay, lady, and what might thy dream be?"

"It is soon told. When I was in Italy I dreamed that I sat amid sunshine and flowers, and sweet sounds and odorous airs, and ripe fruits, enjoying the magnificent flow of a noble stream, such as those in which poets bathe their goddesses. As I gazed on the stream it changed all at once into a dragon, and just as it was about to devour me, the sword of my brother Morison struck the monster's head off, and I sprang into his arms. Need I tell you how gloriously my dream was explained!"

Mary looked with an earnest and glistening eye on the young lady; the colour was heightened on her cheek; a deeper throb was in her bosom. "Why should I not," she murmured, "speak to her young heart! it wants a monitor as much as

mine did. Lady," she said aloud, "did you ever stand on the summit of Barnhourie rock, with the sea dashing against its base a hundred feet down, when the whirlwind was behind you, ready to sweep you far beyond hope or mercy?"

"Never," answered Rose; "it must be an awful sight."

Mary laid her hand on her arm, and said slowly, "Lady, you are there now: pray to God to preserve you; put on a high resolution and step back, for before you is perdition!"

Rose said, with a faltering voice, "How mean you!—these are words of mystery."

"They shall be so no longer, lady," replied Mary. "You love my son, and it is natural you should do so, for he is noble of heart, and fair in his person; but you wrong your station when you stoop to my bastard boy. Yet, lady, he would not degrade you. No, Morison would not allow even such a vision to appear in his dreams. Lady, I loved highly, and behold my reward—misery—misery—sleep that refreshes not; devotion that cannot save; honour which brings no joy; a heart crushed and desirous of a grave. Oh, young and lovely creature, I pity thee!"

Rose rose from her seat; her cheeks as red as the rose of June; her eyes as bright as the stars of December, and, with a voice which emotion made as musical as the sun god's lute, said, "Pity not me; it is my glory! Thinkest thou that I regard the frozen bonds of rank—or worship that idol which kings, not Heaven, have set up? It is time that those chains should be cast off and trampled upon. If we love each other, is not the affection of kindred hearts enough for happiness?"

"But, lady," replied Mary, with a faltering tongue, "thine own birth is, to the eye of the world, dubious—knowest thou not that it is said Lord Roldan is thy father?"

"He is not my father," answered Rose, "I feel that within me which says no to such a rumour; when I see him my heart refuses to say father; when I hear him speak it is without the emotion of a child. Would not nature call out loudly if nature had any tie to unite us. I feel but I cannot prove it. God will do that in his own good time."

"Amen!" said Mary.

When the Lady Rose rode from the Elfin glen, she observed Lord Roldan among the bushes which, like a garland, encircled the upper portion of the linn: she hastened homeward, for the hour was late. When the sound of her palfrey's hastening feet was heard on the wind, his lordship left his hiding-place, and took the way to Carswaddo wood—now pacing slowly, then hurrying onward.

"Whither away sae late, my lord?" said Nickie Neevison, suddenly accosting him. "Keep out o' Carswaddo wood and the Dead-man's plump, and the Caird's cave, for there's unhandy chieils thereawa just now—if ye want a keg o' brandy

or an ell o' lace, yere a' right, and Dick will reverence ye. But guide me too! Not a word. Ay! ay! he's in ane o' his moods, when he meets a lass, no that auld o' the horn yet, passes without salutation. It's altered times—altered times."

Lord Roldan passed Nickie without seeing her. His heart was too deeply moved for common things: he gave his thoughts words unawares. "What demon, what spirit of evil has hitherto directed my course! How nobly that unhappy boy conducted himself before me in Italy! Even the red-capped cardinals heard of it with wonder, and looked to my feet—but the fiend was in my heart, not there. And then the scene in the cavern to-day. Oh how Mary's prayer pierced me—poured melted lead into my soul—put me into perdition before my day—and all by her mercy, her generosity, her tenderness. But the hour is nigh when all these wrongs shall be redressed. When, with her written words and vows, mingled with mine in my hand, shall I stand before her, and command her, in the name of the God whom she worships, to give me a wife to my bosom, and a son to my house." As he said this he entered Carswaddo wood, descended into a ravine down which a noisy stream tumbled, and soon arrived at the Caird's cave, a gloomy and unfrequented spot—the haunt of spirits, according to tradition, and the resort of smugglers, according to truth and the voracious authority of Nickie Neevison.

At the entrance of the cave stood one whom Lord Roldan knew, and all but dreaded! his looks were rough and fierce, his face swart and tanned with distant suns—he had a brace of pistols in his belt, and a sword at his side.

"Art thou there, Corsbane!" inquired Lord Roldan, "and hast thou brought me the proofs?"

"I am here, my lord," he said, gruffly; "but the thing you desire is in the deserts of Libya, in the temple of Jupiter Ammon."

"Fool," said the other, "hast thou been deceiving me, though I have paid thee as much gold as would outweigh that carcass of thine. By yon moon and stars, I swear to give thy flesh to the crows, if thou darest to play me false!"

The ruffian's brow grew dark as death; he fumbled in his bosom, and seemed disposed to resort at once to desperate measures; but his quick eye observed that Lord Roldan's hand was on a weapon of which he was an acknowledged master. Corsbane took a short, quick step or twa as if he trod the deck, and said, with a cleared brow and a careless tongue—

"No one, my lord, could ever say that Dick Corsbane failed of his word. I promised to make my Lord Thomas take a drink of the Solway brine, and though men blamed the tempest, I had my hand in it, though I was not there.

Nor was it my fault that his squalling girl came ashore; your lordship cannot blame me for that. And did I not kidnap the lad Morison at your request? and though I was only to take him a voyage or so, damme! I would have done more than that; I would have sold him like a keg of Hollands in Hispaniola, but he was too quick for me. Give me to the crows! You cannot be so unkind to your old friend Dick Corsbane, damme! I'm your sheet anchor; the corner stone and copestone of your castle!"

"For much that you have now spoken, Richard," said Lord Roldan, "an explanation will presently be asked."

"Ask away now, my lord," answered the other; "no time like the present, damme! we are alive and merry now, we may be as dumb as damnation to-morrow."

"All in good time. But how left you that unhappy lady, my brother's wife? and how came you not to obtain from her, as you undertook, the casket which contains my fate?"

"Why look you, my lord," replied Corsbane; "I was the more ready messenger, because I hoped to help myself to some of those gems which our mad sister scatters in the desert; but there's a difficulty even in very easy matters. A wild beast was in the path, who watched her, nay, damme! watched me like a lynx. I put on the hermit—it would not do! the penitent—'twas all one! became a jolly dog, and shot, and rode, and broke the commandments; yet the eye was ever on me. At last, having failed in all, I began to see visions and have revelations—deused good ones, too! I wondered at my own invention, and was just on the point of passing myself off as a supernatural, and becoming as such entitled to a share of her sway, when, damme! madam opened her eyes, struck the daft and hoisted the sane—and then, ye know, she is as sharp as needles and preens—so I was obliged to bolt—make myself scarce, as the saying is. She will be here, too, anon."

Lord Roldan answered sternly, "This won't pass with me. You stole the writing of which I speak from the casket in the desert, and hadst best produce it. What scruple possesses thee now? If that boy has clung round thy heart as he has done round all other hearts, and thou art reluctant to trust me with a treasure which makes him heir of Roldan, know, that I desire it, that I may proclaim his honourable birth to the world."

"Clung around my heart!" muttered the ruffian; "naught ever clung round that but a blasted brat, that had so much of my own nature that I half believed him my son. But his day came, damme! sorry for the blow—it was given in drink, too—missed him a bit at first, and half piped my eye. Well, well, say on; I wonder what put that spawn of the devil in my head; say on."

"Why, Richard," said Lord Roldan, "you start aside; you speak not to the point. I said that I intend to announce the honourable birth of my son Morison to the world."

Still Corsbane continued to speak indirectly. "No, damme! Morison did not get round my heart, though a smart fellow enough, but eaten up with self-conceit; devoured by pride. And then how he gazed me down in the desert—no, could see his heart's blood!"

"I may as well let him cleanse his breast," thought Lord Roldan; and he paced to and fro, looking now at the stars, and next at the stream, and lending a careful ear to the words of the other.

"Ha! so," exclaimed Corsbane, "you are about to proclaim Morison your lawful son; but how will that be done? You know Mary of the Elfin glen would as soon own the great fiend, flint horn and all, for her husband; unless you show her what you told her was destroyed, the little bit of parchment on which is recorded your vows and names—and where is that to be found?"

"Richard," said the other, sneeringly, "you wrong the milkiness of your own nature; what! the man who drowned his companions without cause—who spilled the blood of one, and sold that of another—to be scrupulous in such small matters! I tell thee, thou new proselyte to morality, that the document which I require of thee is to be used for a moral, a religious purpose; there's balm to thy soul!"

"They taunt best who taunt last, my lord," murmured Richard; "but take it!" he put his hand in his bosom, "and the devil give you joy of it!"

As he spoke he snatched a pistol, but Lord Roldan as quick as lightning struck it out of his hand, sending it gleaming through the air, and drawing the sword which his cane contained, attacked Corsbane with equal quickness and skill. For some time the ruffian, who defended himself with his cutlass, found it unsafe to draw his second pistol; and when he succeeded in plucking it out, to cock it and present it, exposed him to such thrusts as would have been mortal, but for a shirt of flexible mail beneath his dress. At last the blade of Lord Roldan's sword snapped in two, and in the same moment he fell, from a pistol shot in his bosom.

"Ha, my lord!" exclaimed the other, triumphantly, "I have now paid you for many insults and sneers; who shall read your marriage lines to madam of the Elfin glen? and who shall proclaim Morison as your own lawful son? The hour is come that I long desired; the injuries of twenty years are expiated, and it will go hard with me if I fail to sit down quietly in Roldan Castle, and drink thy wines, and have them brought by Lady Rose in the guise of a menial. Ha! hearst thou that?"

"Eternal villain!" said the wounded lord. "Oh, that

some one would come to hear me own my boy—my Morison!"

"Oh come, some one; will no one come at my lord's call?" cried Corsbane. "Where be all his loitering menials—where be his priests to hear him confess—will no one come? Damme! how little a lord's word is regarded in this place."

It seemed as if the dying nobleman's call was about to be answered: the sudden snapping of boughs and spurning of loose stones, which went leaping into the linn beneath, bespoke the hasty approach of some one.

"Stand back, keep aloof, else you are a dead man!" growled Corsbane, addressing the sound, for as yet he could discern no one, so thick grew the holly and hazel which overhung the path.

The person that approached paused not on this, but came rushing forward, drawing his sword as he came, and folding a cloak sparkling with gold and gems round his left arm. On confronting Corsbane he said, "God in heaven! what is this!" striking the desperado's cutlass at the same time with the purpose of disarming him.

"Ha, younker!" exclaimed the captain; "you are not so smart at that as the carrion among my feet was. Come on, damme! Dick Corsbane will dish you out as he has done your dad there. What say you now, my lord, to owning your bastard boy?"

Morison—for it was he himself—glanced at his father, where he lay bleeding, with the right foot of the ruffian treading on his long hair. "Step off!" he said; "take your accursed foot away!"

"Nay, damme! the foot shall keep down the father, and the hand shall put down the son;" and Corsbane struck vehemently as he spoke.

"Strike him in the throat, my son, as we strike the adder," murmured Lord Roldan; "he cannot fly;" and he fastened his hands in a mortal clench round the ruffian's leg.

"You escaped from one burning place—go to a hotter!" said Morison; and he attacked him with the speed of lightning. The chain mail repelled three thrusts, which had otherwise been mortal.

"Ha!" said he, "my waistcoat is better than you think. And is this my reward for doing my lord's orders—and something more?"

"Villain!" groaned Lord Roldan, "your own dark deeds are placed to my account, and nothing can clear it till the day of doom. My son, why pause you?"

"If there be reckonings to clear up," said Morison, mournfully, "should the life of this wretch not be spared for a time, till he makes the dark into light?"

"Spared!" scornfully exclaimed Corsbane, and he assailed

Morison in his turn; and such was his skill, his energy, and his despair, that he seemed a match for his more cool, more scientific, and equally fiery antagonist.

The clang of their swords rang through the linn; birds started on all sides from the boughs; the pebbles which strewed the path were spurned over the scaur, while the grass and flowers were trampled down, and dropped with blood. The strife was closed as strangely as it commenced. Davie Gellock suddenly appeared; "Horrid be't! as miller Mackittrick says," exclaimed he. "What's a' this! Salame daring to fight wi' Morison! Damme! as Dick says, his guts maun be stuffed with steel to resist that thrust. But here's a St. Domingo trick—the way to crack lobsters;" and suddenly seizing Corsbane, he hurled him with irresistible violence down the precipitous scaur. Neither stone at which he caught, nor bough which bent beneath him, retarded his descent; a sullen plunge in the deep pool fifty feet beneath, the silence which followed, the agitated bubble, and instant composure of the waters, told that his moments of existence were expired. "Gosh!" said Davie, "but yon water-pyot gat a fleg, as Dick played plunge beside him! Weel, but the air's the sweeter o' being cleared o' him."

CHAPTER XVI.

They made a bier o' the mountain ash,
And of the hazel brown;
But through the green and fragrant boughs
His life blood trickled down.

JOHNNIE OF BREADISLEE.

MORISON stood and gazed on Lord Roldan with deep emotion; his broken sword was lying on the ground; the pistol with which the mortal wound was given lay reeking at the muzzle; he was without motion, and life seemed extinct. On moving him, however, he breathed and moaned; and half unclosed his eyes. Morison opened his bosom where the ball had penetrated; he was bleeding inwardly. "He must not lie here," said Davie, "and die like a wounded deer in the brake. Could we but get him borne into the ladies' walk, which runs through the head of the glen, we might reach the castle before the spark o' life fled."

While he said this, Morison had stanchd the bleeding of the wound, and taken his resolution. "Here," he said, "David, my friend, take my sword and pistols, and walk

behind; I shall bear him out of this murderous den." As he spoke, he lifted Lord Roldan in his arms as if he had been a child, and carrying him from the glen, entered the ladies' walk, from whence he saw the turrets of Roldan tower rising gray amid the silent moonlight.

"We shall hae help now," said Davie, "for here's lights coming in a stream; ane wad think a dozen spunkies had gane mad, and ta'en the way to Carswaddo wood."

Morison laid the wounded nobleman upon a bank of flowers beside a little well, and taking water in his hands, first bathed his temples and brow, then brought more and held it to his lips. Lord Roldan pressed the hand that did this with his burning lips, opened his darkening eyes, and murmured, "Bless thee! bless thee, my injured boy! forgive and pray for your unhappy father!"

The tears gushed from Morison's eyes in streams. "Oh, that my mother were but here!" he muttered, and turning tenderly to his father, knelt beside him, his tears dropping plentifully on his hands, and sobbing as if his heart would burst.

Servants now arrived from the castle; they held up their torches as they came crowding around, and wonder and fear were written on their brows. "Wha has wrought this bloody work?" cried one; and "Wha has murdered our lord?" exclaimed another. "Need ye ask that?" said a third; "wha murdered him but the twasome we found wi' the body, plundering it, nae doubt?"

"Silence!" said Morison, rising from his knees, "and bear my father to the castle. Is there any skill at hand?" The servants gazed on Morison; they whispered to one another, and taking Lord Roldan in their arms, bore him into the castle, and laid him on a couch, the blood flowing freshly from the wound. The ball had passed nearly through his body, and showed blue behind.

Two servants with drawn swords placed themselves at the door, two more occupied the hall; the departing clatter of horses' feet was heard, of others spurring away for help; while the grayheaded steward whispered to some of the most trusty, "These precautions can do nae harm, be the murderer within or without these bigged waas; ane has escaped already." He alluded to Davie, who heard Morison wish for his mother, and bounded off like a deer, asking no one's pleasure.

"Let me lie as I am," murmured Lord Roldan, "life is failing fast. But oh, my son! death to me is welcome, since it has brought us together. Where is the Lady Roldan?"

"He's raving—he's raving," muttered his domestics. "Lady Roldan has not been in the body since that fearful night when the Solway sea swallowed up Lord Thomas."

"I say," he inquired, "where is the Lady Roldan? Morison, my son, where is your mother?"

The domestics looked on Morison, and Morison on them, but no one spoke; at that moment steps were heard, and Mary entered, her hair loosened and flowing in fleeces around her shoulders, her dress disordered, and her looks wild and agitated.

"Whisht!" said Davie. "Let him speak first; for fame and name are in his breath."

But Mary flew to the bosom of her son, "Oh, my child, God has given you back to my prayers: his name be praised!" She turned to the couch where lay Lord Roldan, as pale as the clay which he was shortly to become. She saw his garments stained with blood; she traced the line of dark and heavy drops along the floor; she beheld the marks of the fray on her son's person, and dropped in a strong fainting fit with terror and dismay. No one was so quick as the Lady Rose to aid in restoring her, and while she busied herself in that gentle task, her eyes attested the tremours of her heart. She gazed on Lord Roldan, on Morison, on Mary, and then on the armed servants, yet she dared not ask one question, lest she should hear something too frightful to be borne.

Lord Roldan's eyes roamed about the hall—he muttered, "Where is he? The Roldans were a noble-looking race, from Warnebald, who established the house, down to him who lies like a crushed worm in his own hall. Where is he?—his looks and his deeds are worthy of the noblest of them all!" As he said this his eyes found Morison, who stood with moistened cheeks behind him; his looks brightened; he half rose from his couch, unmindful of the blood which broke through every bandage, and exclaiming, "They are both here!" held out his arms, and then slowly sank down, moving his hands in agony, more at his inability to speak than from his sufferings.

Mary looked on him; her heart heaving violently against the laces of her bodice, and her eyes dropping—nay, raining tears. "How has this chanced, my son," she said, "and who hath done this deed? The eagle is stricken in his eyry."

"A falcon towering in his pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed."

murmured the wounded man.

"The villain is gone to his account," said Morison; "but here comes skill. Oh, that it had come sooner, for the wound is beyond my handling!"

"And beyond the skill of man," said Lord Roldan, in a low voice, and sitting up as if to receive company. "Maxwell, you are welcome; not the less so, that you have gentle blood in your veins to grace your skill, though skill is vain for me.

This youth, whom men call Morison Roldan, and others General Roldan, is my son—my lawful son—the son of Lady Roldan! Why stare ye like startled deer? Mary—Mary Morison—the writing which we wrote together in the Elfin cave—twined with our hair, and sealed with my signet—it was not destroyed, and thou art lady of this house; a nobler one never ruled in it."

"I attend to every word you say, my lord," said Maxwell; "I hope others will remember them—they sound strange to me."

"God bless you for that, Maxwell! Oh, had that accursed villain but given me the proofs—Mary would then have listened to the words of the dying."

"I listen to you, Roldan," said Mary, kneeling at his side, "you are my husband, as much as solemn vows spoken, and solemn words written can make you. Come here, my son!"

Morison knelt, but he knelt to one living parent; the hand which Mary offered to the husband of her youth was taken, pressed, but the fingers relaxed; the head drooped, and Lord Roldan fell dead in the arms of his son.

"There!" said the steward, shaking his hoary head, "these are the solemn sounds which accompany a Roldan out of the world and bring a Roldan into it!" As he spoke a peal of thunder commencing at a distance came rolling near, till it seemed to seize the tower of Roldan, and shake it to the foundation: while a cloud sailing over the hill tops, emptied from its bosom a deluge that awakened all the rills and rendered the Glengarnock linns audible at a couple of miles. The lightning which flashed by, seemed to linger a moment at the windows to show the ghastly faces of the living as well as the dead, and the wind, as it swept the tree tops and the turrets in angry gusts, seemed to have got a tongue all but human: so readily a natural sound seems of joy or wo, according to the mood in which we listen to it.

"This is an awful gust, my lady!" said the steward, addressing Mary, "but it will soon blow by, and we shall have sunshine the morn; and will my Lord Roldan please to direct me to move the body of our dear lord into the stateroom, that we may have all done that is due to his birth and rank." Morison gazed on the old man, and answered not a word—his mother threw herself on the body; kissed the yet warm lips, and the yet lifelike brow, and was borne out in a fainting fit.

When the body of Lord Roldan was carried into the stateroom, there was a general lamentation among the menials: female joy, or female grief is generally in the van, and so it proved now, for no voices were so clamorously mournful, as those of the two elder maidens mentioned in the earlier chapters of our history.

"Oh," cried Sour Plooms, "he was the gentlest, the meek-

est, the kindest of masters: though born in the bosom of a persecuting church, yet he tolerated heretical maidens in his household: nay, was affectionate into them—oh, he was the very feather of the cap of honour."

"And oh," cried the Dumpling, with a voice half choking with fat, "his failings leaned aye to the right side; in his youth, when blood was impetuous, he had the sense to seek lemans among the heretics; he never brought one to shame that belonged to the true church."

"Whisht, minion!" said the steward, touching her sharply at the same time with his wand of office—"Whisht, minion! remember she of the Elfin glen is mistress in these halls now!"

"And wherefore should I not utter!" exclaimed the Dumpling in an altered tone, "my love for my late lord, according to my own heart? Was not his course beautiful on the mountains? Did he not love and wed one of the loveliest and best of the land? hath not his son, our now noble lord, gained honour and rank all his own in the earth, and wherefore should he not be lauded? Oh, he was the wisest—"

"Ay, ay, Dame Dumpling, and he sometimes wore two heads under one hood like thyself," whispered the steward. She put no more of her anguish into words, but contented herself with uttering, at stated intervals, a sigh so loud, so whining, and so strange that one of her companions, pinched her arm and muttered, "It won't do, dame, the article's counterfeit!"

With the dawn of day, the tidings flew on all sides that Lord Roldan had been slain in Carswoddie glen by a pirate of the Solway; but rumour refused to tell the truth any further, and reported east that the body of the wicked lord had been carried away in a flash of fire, and his castle levelled by the thunder which accompanied it. As Roldan tower could not be seen in that air, rumour established her leasings for truths. Towards the west the tidings ran that the name of Roldan was rooted out by command of the pope, Napoleon, and George the Third, and the estate bestowed on Mary Morison; because the former averred she was fit to be a canonized saint were it not for her heresy; the second, that she was the mother of one of his best generals; and the latter, that she merited it for her meekness and the Quakerlike sobriety of her nature.

The northward rumour was, that Morison and Davie Gellock had landed with men from France, hanged Lord Roldan over the top turret of his own castle, and proclaimed Napoleon king of Scotland—a kingdom, added the same authority, worth the land of Egypt and Italy to boot. The seaward rumour was equally circumstantial. Lord Roldan, it reported, held the hands of that worthy man, Richard Corbaine, till his bastard son cut his throat; and what was waur than

a', that chip of Satan, Davie Gellock, threw the dead body into Carswoddoo linn; no that it mightna hae Christian burial, for what kent Davie about Christian burial, but that it might get into a geds wame, and sae witness not o' the foul deed. It must be added too, to the credit of the popular imagination, that when the exact truth was known, all who helped to spread and give credit to these conflicting rumours, found no difficulty in reconciling them to the real event. Loudest of all was Nickie Neevison. "I tauld ye sae now! man, wife, and wean—did I no tell ye that the lad wad come and claim his ain some simmer morning wi' a bloody finger? Ay, and get it too!"

Morison, whose eyelids sleep had visited but for a short while, arose with the sun; the first of his acts was to drop on his knees, and in prayer, modest and fervent, thank the God of his kin for his mercy, in making him the avenger of his father's blood and the righter of his mother's wrongs. He then called unto him the old steward, and requested to see Davie Gellock. That worthy was sought, but was nowhere to be found. It was agreed on all hands that, as soon as Lord Roldan had passed from the world, Davie darted from the tower like a staff of fire, as one of the servants who stood guard described it, and made for Carswoddoo wood. "But I'll warrant," continued the same authority, "that he has come to himself, like Will MacWilliam's croudy, by this time; for the staffs of fire that flew, and the burst of waters in the Dead-man's loup, wad bring reflection to the daftest that ever lap." Morison was something touched at this mysterious absence: the scenes of last night had been so agitating, had been huddled up and heaped so on his feelings, that he wished for the aid of Davie, who was generally cool and collected when all others were disturbed and kindled. He had no doubt, however, that his faithful companion was on some errand connected with his interests, and with this to quiet his mind, he sought the hall.

There he found the Lady Rose; she withdrew a long mourning veil from her beautiful features; arose and seemed half inclined not only to meet him, but to drop into his bosom. Morison caught her in his arms, pressed her for a moment to his breast, and said, "Ah, lady, is it doomed that we are never to meet but in moments of blood or of terror?"

"Morison," answered Rose, "the hand of God has begun at last to lift the curtain from the scene of your fortunes—my brother—my cousin—what dare I call you?"

"Yes, the finger of God has been busy here, my children," said Mary Morison, entering; "be resigned, Lady Rosé. He will never leave his good work half done—prepare for brightness soon!"

The Lady Rose blushed as red as the flower which bears her name. "Is it not bright enough for me," she said, "that

I am Lord Roldan's sister? What dearer name is there than that of brother? Alas! have we not been thrown into this great wilderness, the world, almost without protection, and are we not brother and sister in adversity? Let it stand so, my brother; lift no further the veil of fate—let us be happy."

Morison smiled, kissed her brow, and said, "Bless thee, my sister, and may thy brother be worthy of thee."

Mary gazed on them, and the tears rose in her eyes, tears of mingled gladness and sorrow. "Be it so, my children," she said: "but God will not leave matters unexplained: nothing remains hidden but a future state. I, in the pride of my heart, refused to own myself the wedded wife of him, who in the pride of his rank had disowned me; when true nature cried, yes! false nature cried, no! and I committed a crime darker than that the world imputed to me. Now, behold the result! a corse bloody and mangled is my bridegroom, and I have been compelled by the hand of Heaven to own my nuptials when they bring me neither joy nor hope. Bow, I say, to God; resist not; the hour of revelation is at hand, and God will work his will." They looked at each other; bowed their heads and acquiesced.

The steward now entered, and desired to know Lady Roldan's pleasure concerning the laying out of her lord in the room of state, and also the funeral, to which he said the chief Catholics of the vale should be invited.

"Lay Lord Roldan out in the tapestried hall," said Mary: "let the linen be of the finest; let the walls be hung with white satin; let his face be bare, for even in death it is manly and noble, and place a drawn sword at his feet, for he was a gallant soldier, and the Bible at his head, for he believed in God. His funeral shall be, not at midnight and accompanied by torches, but in God's sunshine. These are my orders, and see that they are obeyed."

The old steward bowed, and had reached the door in the act of departure, when a carriage drove furiously up to the porch, and Sir John Scatehouse, with a friend learned in the law, leaped out and entered the castle. Morison, who had never seen this person before, marvelled what he could want; his mother, who knew that, failing the line of Roldan, Sir John claimed to be next of kin, though even this remote affinity was disputed by many, and disowned by the house of Roldan, guessed the cause of his visit, and prepared to receive him accordingly.

He was not long in intimating the cause of his coming: "I am Sir John Scatehouse, nearest of kin and heir to his lordship. Death has been dealing, I hear, with Lord Roldan; where are his coffers, and where his cabinets, that I may seal them up. Let his domestics, too, come before me, some I shall at once dismiss, for the estate has been eaten up with such."

"Please you, sir," said the steward, who regarded him merely as a visiter, "we are all much moved—even now our good lord has been brought home a corse; see, the drops of his blood are not yet dry on the floor—I dread it will never wash out; defer your visit—your card will be enough."

"My card, you dotard!" exclaimed Sir John, "a dead lord cannot read! who is here to whom such a thing can be presented?"

"I am here, sir," said Morison, stepping forward.

"And who are you, sir?" exclaimed the other, perplexed at once and enraged.

"A fair question. I am Morison, Lord Roldan! Please to be seated. To what do I owe the honour of this visit?"

There was something in the glance and tone of Morison which neither Sir John nor his doer altogether liked. The latter took up the subject, "Why, sir," said he, "we were not prepared when we heard of a dead Lord Roldan, to hear in the next breath of a living one; you are, I presume, aware, that, failing heirs of the body of his late lordship, my friend Sir John Slatehouse would succeed. Now, sir, how do you put your claim? you see I give you fair play; no one ever could accuse Gilbert Armstrong of injustice."

"I put my claim," replied Morison, "on plain and simple grounds: I am the son of Lord Roldan."

"Whew! whew! I wadna gie ye a bawbee for your right or your title either, young man!" exclaimed the doer. "Sir John, this is poor Mary Morison's misfortune, that puts in its claim—ha—ha—ha! We men of the law see mony queer things, and hear o' mae—but this is aye of the queerist!"

"Oh! Morison, my bairn, regard them not!" said his mother, clasping her arms around him, for his eyes gleamed, and thoughts of violence entered his mind. "Remember, our right, though of old date, is but even now established; and, oh, bear in mind, that him to whom you owe it lies a mangled corse in the adjoining chamber. Be meek and humble, my son!"

Sir John, who seemed to imagine that Grippie Armstrong, as the peasantry called him, was going too softly about the business, took it up more roughly. "Woman," said he, "quit this house! are you not ashamed to look people of conduct and character in the face? Take thy son with thee; but stay, if he is the person who has fought against his own land under the banner of France, and whom the Corsican in a moment of merriment made a general, I must command him to stay: the law of the land has an awkward claim on him."

Morison smiled and said, "It is safe enough to command him to stay who is resolved not to go. Your threats I defy: I am here not without the leave of our good king, obtained for me by a great soldier, and greater man—Napoleon. There is his majesty's permission. The title of Roldan I

regarded not, and even had a scruple in my own heart respecting it; but I find my mother's honour, and my own purity of descent demand that I should claim it and maintain it. And I shall do so either with hand or tongue, or both; be measured in your language, therefore, you may just have noble blood enough in your veins to entitle you to the distinction of a blow." As he said this, a double-edged sword wielded by Halbert Roldan on the field of Bannockburn, dropped from the wall, with a clang on the floor that made some of the auditors start.

"Sir John," whispered Grippie, "ye mauna lippen to the sword—steel has declared against ye—ye maun trust to the tongue, and ye shall find mine a slee and a sleeky ane. This matter is no sae dooms difficult to manage, if we gang cannilie about it. Ye see the hale thing is hearsay—there's nae written testimony."

The valour with which Sir John commenced the combat continued in vigour so long as he thought that he had meek-spirited folk to deal with and browbeat; but the calm menacing looks of Morison staggered him. He felt as if a dagger touched his fifth rib; when he saw his majesty's permission—not to a wandering bastard boy—but to General Roldan, at the request, too, of him who had shaken thrones east and west, his heart and his hopes began to die within him, and he would have retired, apologizing as he went, but for the brazen impudence of the doer, who trusted to dispossess the possessor, and establish his client.

"All this is very gude," said Grippie; "nay, pleasant, for I rejoice in the fame of the sons of the soil: and when the name of General Roldan was pronounced with honour, my heart leaped in my bosom. But all this right feeling on my part, and true valour on his, will not make him Lord Roldan. Who, I ask with humility, saw his father and mother married? What magistrate joined their hands? In what kirk were they kirked? What are the names of the witnesses of the ceremony? Poh! poh! the claim of General Roldan has not a leg to stand on—not a wooden leg, sir. I suppose these were pretty numerous in your service—pardon the joke—excuse the wit; Gad! it made me almost forget what was most material to ask. Where are the marriage lines, with the signatures of my Lord Roldan and Mary—bonnie Mary, as we called her; no joke that, sir—of the Elfin glen? Why need I ask—they never existed." The silence which followed this question was interrupted by the abrupt advance of one who has often appeared in this true history.

"I can answer that, Master Grippie!" exclaimed Davie Gellock, stamping on the threshold, ejecting at each stamp half a pailful of water from his boots; and then marching up to the table, leaving a moist trail behind him, such as a watering-pot throws on the dusty walk of a garden plot.

"For Heaven's sake, David, where have you been?" inquired Morison.

"Now isnae that unco genteel in my maister?" said Davie to Sir John, "to ca' me David afore folk; though, damme! as the defunct Captain Corsbane said, Davie was gude enough for Maister Grippie here. There's nae need o' standing on stepping stanes wi' a tarry-fingered attorney; and as far you, Sir John Sclatohouse, ye're but a Satan's picture of humanity: d'ye mind when we aye called ye gowkspittle, because Providence had put ye sae shabbily together?"

"Ah, Davie! my old facetious and clouterly acquaintance," said Armstrong, eying him with a sort of sarcastic recognition, "you are not aware that you are in the presence of my Lord Roldan, ay, and Lady Roldan too. God make us sensible of his mercies! Ye have come by water, my friend; have ye been diving in the Solway for evidence? pardon the joke—couldn't resist it for my soul: and it is no dry joke neither: not bad that, eh, Sir John?"

"Dev'lish gude," said Davie, "cursedly droll, or damme then! as the defunct Corsbane chose to word it. Ay! that is Lord Roldan; and this is Lady Roldan! I heard the dead lord say that, and I hae been swooning for proof, diving for evidence; and I hae found it too. Davie's no sae gleg in Latin words and Greeks as some folk are; every finger he has isnae a ged heuk like thine, Grippie; and yet somehow he's gaye and gleg whiles; kens a B frae a bull's foot, and a hawk frae a hoodie crow."

Morison saw that his follower's face intimated intelligence of great note, but he knew the quickest way of obtaining it was to let David pursue his own course. Not so Sir John Sclatohouse: "Come, fellow! if you have aught to say, why say it, or else be off! I protest I shall catch cold by this damp person standing in my vicinity."

"Good! that's smart, on my honour, but not understood by the utterer quite," muttered Armstrong, between the palms of his hands, as he leaned forward on the table.

"Od! Sclatohouse," exclaimed Davie, "had ye been in the boddom o' the Dead-man's plump, in the howe of Carswaddo linn, ye wad hae been gaye and damp as well as Davie. But bide a wee, and I'll quat yere vicinity, as ye ca't; though a lad that has been in battle, breast and breast wi' Morison, and publicly thanked by such lads as Lannes, may set up his crest, aae wad think, in onybody's vicinity. But now to the point, as Grippie there said when he took the sow by the snout; let us apply, as Dominie Milligan was wont to express it, when he preached a' fowk into slumber with his fifteenths and sixteenthlys; or, come to the scratch and be damned! as the worthy defunct Corsbane was wont to word it. Weel, the short and the long of the matter's this. I took a hint frae the scattered words of the dying lord, and

frae what I had seen in the desert, and laying them together, as my lord gied the last gasp, and nae mair was to be spoken, I said, slapping my knees with both hands this way, 'I'll hae the secret out o' him, an I should follow him to the Solway.'

"Follow who, fellow?" said Sir John Sclatohouse.

"Dick Corbane, damme!" said Davie; "d'ye think I dinna ken what I'm talking about. Ay, clink it a' down, Grippie, gif ye like; but see and dinna eke a codicil to it as ye did to the Laird o' Skipmire's will—ye comprehend." The doer bit his lip and discontinued writing.

"Weel, where was I?" continued David, "ou, ay? I'll hae the secret out o' him, an' I should follow him to the Solway, and to the Solway I had oblige to gang, but I'm no out o' Carswaddo linn yet. So ye see I hurried down the glen; a hollin bush caught me here, a muckle stane stayed me there; and the Dead-man's plump was as deep as the Red Sea—Carswaddo burn wad hae driven a hundred mill. Sae I broke and ran for the Mermaid linn, and there I got a swatch o' him borne along like a foam on the wave. Now, cried I, an he taks to the Solway, I may sing to him—ance gane and aye gane. Weel, as tuck wad hae't, the tide came up and pushed back the waters, and just in the midst o' the guller, where the saut faught wi' the fresh, I gat a gliak o' him, and right bolt in I went, and gat him by the han'."

"Got who, in the name of Heaven?" exclaimed Sir John.

"A merman, Sclatohouse," answered Davie; "sae as the sea wadnae receive him and the stream was fain to spue him out, I e'en took compassion on him and streaked him out to sype in the morning sun; undid his mantle; unbuttoned his waistcoat; and what d'ye think his sark was made of!—o'the linked steel! nae wonder he withstood you, Morison, that man never withstood and lived. Clink down that, Grippie—some hae withstood you an' be hanged, too."

"I see it' all—I see it all, Morison," whispered Rose, "there's a triumphant devil in Davie's eye; see how he looks on the knight and his doer; he has the written proofs; see, he seems to regard them as a couple of mice; he extends his great brawny paws over them; but what has he got now? this can never be it."

"Na, Lady Rose," said Davie, "it's no it; but ae thing at a time, as Grippie said, when he nabbed—but I'll say naught that's no law-biding—catch me putting myself within his steel heuks. This, that I haud, in my hand is the point of Morison's sword there—snapped aff the links o' the captain's chain mail—I can swear to the bit, fit or no fit. And what is this now? the broken point of Lord Roldan's sword, baith ettled at Dick's breast bane, damme! as the defunct loved to say. Weel, ye see, the queerest o' a's coming now. I was say wrapped up in my search, that even I dinna hear the roaring o' the linn, nor see the light of the new risen

sun; but I thought I was a' wrang, when suddenly ae hand was laid on ae shoulder, and anither hand on the tither shoulder, and whingers flashed in the sun, and twa or three voices cried out at ance—

"Our captain's murdered, and here's the murderer!" What a sprang I gaed! and flung ane ae way, and anither anither way. But I glowered wilder when one of them, dropping his cutlass, cried, 'Cousin Davie, is this thee? Then, lads, a' is right!' Sae I e'en tauld Johnnie Martin how matters stood. How in the howe o' the night and the deeps o' the linn I found Corsbane fighting wi' my Lord Roldan; how the taen was cloddod owre the linn, and the tither drappin down dead, and that I had come to seek the body, for it had a token about it that wad settle the lordship o' Roldan. 'That's likely,' said my cousin, 'I aye jaloused that Corsbane kenned mair about the affairs of Lord Roldan than he was willing to let on. He has held mysterious language wi' me ever since he came frae the East—where he as gude as tauld me, he took what a lady refused to gie him—and that now he had the hand o' the bridal in his own hand, and wad ride Lord Roldan as hard as ever a witch rode a broomstick.'"

Here Davie paused, and taking a small case of gold from his bosom, touched a spring, unclasped it, and there lay a slip of parchment wound about with two different tresses of hair; one as dark as the back of the sea raven; the other a long and of 'glistening brown. "There, ye coofs!" exclaimed Davie, knocking suddenly the heads of Sir John and his doer together, till the fire flew from their eyes, "there's the marriage lines signed and sealed, of Lord and Lady Roldan; day and date too, I can swear to Mary Morison's writing among tenthousand; mony a letter came frae her to us in a far land!"

"And I can say the same for the handwriting of Lord Roldan," said the Lady Rose. "What more is wanting! Brother, I wish you joy in the midst of this mourning. Mother, you know I have long hoped for this!"

"Sclatehouse," said the doer, "this wark is owre right and tight for us to undo; these lines are written by Lord Roldan, thousands can swear to that."

This document, so strangely found, was shown to Lady Roldan: her colour changed from the brightest red to the deadliest pale, and she would have fallen on the floor had not her son caught her in his arms. In the bustle which ensued, amid cutting of laces and the opening of casements, Sir John and his doer left the house, but not without experiencing the hostile remembrance of some of the domestics, in the guise of foul water.

CHAPTER XVII.

They howkit his grave in the Dookit kirkyard.

Old Song.

THE thick-crowding events which we have related agitated the whole of Glengarnock and the adjoining district; though John Geddes thought that "Providence had ta'en mair on himself than there was Scripture warrant for, in putting Mary Morison's bastard boy at the head of the gentry," and Jamie Adamson was of opinion that "honest John Slatehouse had been somehow cheated out of the inheritance of blood," yet, on the whole, it was admitted that fate had not behaved amiss, and that "waur might hae happened for Morison, though dour and self-willed, had been bred baith in John Milligan's school and in the school of adversity: and what mair could hae been done for him had he been an earl's son?" The document produced in the teeth of the man of law; the dying testimony of the late lord, and the tale which Davie told far and near, fixed Morison and his mother in the lordship of Roldan beyond doubt or cavil. Congratulations flowed in upon him from titled and untitled, but of all the welcomes he received none went nearer his heart than that of the heiress of Howeboddom.

Jeanie Rabson heard the story of Lord Roldan's death and Morison's accession with a patience, she said, that she pitied herself for, because Davie Gellock was the relator, aided by supplemental as well as interruptional notes by Nickie Neeverson. "The darkest night will draw to day," she said, when the two hours' detail was concluded. "This is a story fit for print: there's less marvellous romances than that same sold at a high price. But what am I sitting here for? am I glued to the stool? I'll up and awa, and welcome my ain bairn to his lordship. James, will ye no gang wi' me—Mary's my lady now?" and she drew herself up before the glass, adjusting her headgear, and throwing over all a new mantle which had never seen, she said, sun or win' before, the gift of Morison.

James sat as quiet and motionless as a figure of stone. "Jeanie," he said, without turning his head, "Jeanie Rabson, I canna gang, I durna gang, I dared scarcely look on her before; but now plain James Rabson sounds ill wi' Lady Roldan!"

"Hout, tout, brother! nae waur than Lord Roldan sounded wi' Mary Morison: but oh! God forgie my liberty! is not

the corse of her husband lying bloody and cauld at her feet; James, ye mauna come."

Jeanie had been some minutes on her way before she was aware that Davie was at her side; she was first made aware of this by his exclamation of, "But I'm saying, heiress! your gudeman's no dead, and my brother's no slain, and there's nae reason that we should take on in this way. D'ye ken, heiress, when I was in Coelo-Syria, I thought on you and on the witty way in which ye baffled me; and when I was on a dromedary's back in the desert of Shittim, I said, oh for a mouthful of Howeboddom crap of whey! Ye ken, Jeanie, ye whiles put a spoonfu' of cream in it, for ye pitied the poor duddie fatherless boy: and I aye think that was the thing that gaured me fa' in love wi' ye, heiress."

"Whether d'ye mean, my cream or my pity?" said Jeanie.

"There now!" exclaimed Davie, "that's the glance that pleases me—an half jest and half earnest; I see we'll understand ane another in time. But I'm saying, how stands matters between you and the dominie? he had ance the advantage owre me whilk learning gies, and I aye fand mysel' sinking in your esteem when he spake in Latin or in Greek. But now I can bell the cat wi' him."

"Have ye grown very learned, David," said the heiress, "since we met last?"

"Try me!" exclaimed the other; "I have been in the land of Egypt and handled the very bricks whilk the Hebrews made without straw and by means of a miracle; and I drank out o' the well of Marah, it was dooms bitter! Ou, learned! I'm sae learned that I hae some thoughts o' finishing the dominie's sticket sermon on the pomegranate."

"Aweel, David, ye hae a gude report o' yoursel'," said Jeanie: "let me hope that a' thae gifts are Grace's; but talk o' the deil and he'll appear, if this binna the dominie I never saw him in my life."

The person to whom these words referred was dressed like a harlequin; Joseph's coat of many colours was but a type of the apparel in which it was the dominie's pleasure that morning to array himself. "Is this John Milligan?" exclaimed Jeanie, "or the ghost of a rainbow? Oh! it's you sure enough; but wha in the name o' red, blue, green, yellow, brown, and black, attired ye that way! I protest, the hedge sparrows dinna ken ye, and the jay-pyets are alarmed at plumage more gaudy than their own."

"Now, heiress, woman," said the dominie, "these various items o' apparel whilk displease ye sae, I consider and call my honours: these purple hose, with a cloud o' yellow, were woven in a present by the gude wife of Hazellyhowe, because her daughter could tell her the Latin for woo-creel; this other buttoned piece of apparel whilk I name not—but whilk—"

"We call them breeks in Cælo-Syria," said David, with the most audacious composure; "in Libya they are called breechen, but in Arabia Petrea, where they are unknown, they are without a name, as in Britain: there's much resemblance between the Eastern and Western languages."

"I protest," said the enraptured teacher, "if this binna my ane friend, David Gellock! An ye hae been in the Scripture lands! oh, man, but ye were baith blessed and trusted—ye have an oriental sort of hue, and a Babylonian touch of tongue: David, we must have a thorough through gaun of the Bible together."

"Ay, that we maun," said Davie, "and our discourse shall be of the gourds, and the manna, and the lentils, and the pomegranates." The dominie's looks fell.

"Weel, dominie," said the heiress, "then I'm to understand that all the component parts of this jay-pyot dress was given out of respect for your skill in teaching—the clouded stockings, the indescribable breeks, as I think they ca' them, the tartan waistcoat, and the thunder-an-lightning coat. Aweel, and where may ye be carrying a' thae bleezing honours to now?"

"Ye amaze me," said John Milligan; "am I not going up to fall on the neck of my ane boy Morison, and tell him that all this honour comes from trusting in the Lord of Hosts, and in having been a dutiful son and ane kindhearted friend! Ay, ay, genius and learning will find honour in the land now, heiress; Howeboddum will not be the only house where the sound of a learned language will be acceptable."

"With me, too," said Davie, "shall genius find a home; and classic lore take shelter: I shall buy land, build a house, and wed some one. On ilka Tuesday night shall my doors be open, and my table spread for those who choose to come and hold discourse on the art of war and the art of verse; on the science of digging a hole in the earth, and telling its history from the moors; and, moreover, all who can speak of the habits of mice, and the manners of monkees, shall be made welcome. Then, dominie, on the Fridays we shall discourse on Arabia Felix and the Written mountains of Abyssinia; and for all who can speak Chaldaic, Teutonic, or any other oriental tongue, shall my table be spread and my wine poured out. I learned all this at Tadmor in the Wilderness, at the palace of a princess: I was a favourite there—but my heart was at Howeboddum." And when Davie said this, he sighed, and bowed to the heiress in a style truly oriental.

The dominie's heart sank within him, when he heard this open avowal, and reflected on the manifold allurements of one who had seen Arabia Felix and Tadmor in the Wilderness. He swallowed a sigh or two, set his face straight for the castle of Roldan, leaned a little forward, added an inch or two to his stride, and put himself under such a swing-

ing weigh that Jeanie had some difficulty in keeping up with him.

"Bodie," said the heiress, "ye'll kill yersel!" and then wha will sit and talk like ony minister on the Saturday nights at Howeboddum; Jamie will miss ye, and I'll miss ye, and the cat will miss ye. Weel, weel, een as ye like, but I'll no risk raising the stitch in my side, in trying to keep up wi' a man whase legs are rinning away wi' him." And the heiress, as Davie expressed it, fell back from the van upon the rear division, and recovered her colour and composure.

"It is the way of learned men and the children of genius in Lower Arabia," said the intrepid Davie: "here the patient works his fit out on shanks's naigie; there, when the bard is fully possessed, he leaps on a wild horse and away through the wilderness, singing out his fancies as he flies along, and comes hame wi' a new poem on his tongue tap, and the knapsack o' some plundered traveller in his hand—but here's the castle."

This was the day of Lord Roldan's funeral; the hall was hung with black; the body lay under a splendid canopy of velvet and plumes; the domestics, from the steward to the groom, including Dumpling and Sour Plooms, were in mourning, and it was remarked of those two dames, that a double portion of vinegar soured their looks, and that their words were dry, bitter, and snappish. "Were I him," said Dumpling, "an they were to offer to lay me in the grave in daylight, when all my ancestors were buried by the light of torches, I would rise up among them all and scare the heretic souls of them—an the old lady had been living!—but then she was a lady!"

"Ay, but ye see," said Sour Plooms, "the sun's on the other side o' the waa now; we dinna fear the light o' day, dead or alive: see if my Lord Morison will allow his worthy father to make a moonlight flitting o't to the grave and be buried by torchlight, as if the light of heaven was nae gude enough for the best Papist that ever bowed to Baal or worshipped Ashtaroth."

The dominie now stalked into the castle hall, followed by Jeanie and Davie: the latter was at home wherever he went; not so the dominie, he gaped, he stared, he stepped to the right, he stepped to the left, and then he stepped forward; and having heard of ringing a bell, seized the golden tassel which hung from a banner on the wall, and pulled flag and flagstaff about his ears. With no hesitating step entered Davie. "This way, heiress," he said. "I ken every step in the house as if it were my own inheritance; here, Sour Plooms—Dumpling, what do they ca' ye? show the heiress to the Lady Roldan; does she tak on muckle now about the wee bit accident that befell her lord? As for Morison, he

kens better about it—we hae seen dead men lying as thick as the leaves in Carswaddo wood, or damme, then! as that dear defunct Corsbane used to say.”

“Me!” said Sour Plooms to her companion, “ane better born and better bred nor ony o’ them, to be gentlewoman usher to a ewemilker!—a draggley byre woman!—see her far enough first; ye may gang if ye please—if it’s wrang, ye can get absolution, and there’s a penny to pay for’t.”

The wrath of Dumpling boiled over upon this. “A penny may pay for my errors,” said she, “but the estate of Roldan coined into spade guineas, wadna pay for yours—no that they are errors of flesh either;—ay, ye may spit venom and fire frae ’tween thae skinny lips!” For all this, they ushered Jeanie into the room of state, where Lady Roldan, Lady Rose, and Morison were seated, making abundante of becks, and bestowing a profusion of smiles by the way.

Jeanie ran and clasped Lady Roldan in her arms; she bestowed the same favour on Morison, with the addition of a kiss on his forehead; then sat down on a velvet sofa, looked at them again, and at the splendid pictures and burnished armour, and gilded cabinets, and burst into tears. “Oh! but I am fain, and I am sad: fain to see ye sitting in the high place that belongs to ye, and sad to think that it has not come till the eleventh hour. Oh, Morison, man! for these twenty years and odd has your mother been kept out of her station—the grace and ornament of the country side; but it’s come now, and let us be thankful.”

“Indeed, Jeanie,” replied Lord Roldan, “I could almost wish it had never come—it has come by blood, when it should have come of free will; and, alas! it has come to one too who cannot enjoy it. Troubled looks; tear-wet eyes; involuntary sobbings; sleep that brings no refreshment; food that gives no nourishment—these, alas! are the fruits of this unsought, unlooked-for—though merited exaltation.”

They all looked at Lady Roldan: she sat calm as was her wont, but as white, neck, cheek, brow, and hands, as the purest marble; the blood seemed to have forsaken her frame: she opened her lips and seemed disposed to speak, yet uttered not a word, though she murmured something about vows which had been broken.

“Broken!” said Jeanie, “alas, they were indeed broken; but has not God as it were, taken the matter into his ain hand, as I aye fortauld? And are ye not Lady Roldan, as was said and sworn? I dinna bid you smile and take state on you just now; but when the grave has gotten its ain, I shall look for my ain auld kind feeling friend, Mary Morison, in your ladyship. Ay, Morison, lad, and I will have a lang reckoning wi’ you for misleard deads when ye were a boy: d’ye mind whan ye iocked Dominie Milligan an’ me into the milk closet, and then wrote a sang anent it? Oh! sirs, I shall often

think o' thae times! but Mary, will ye no speak—has grandeur made ye dumb? if sae, Heaven send me back to my ain Mary Morison, and make a painted image of Lady Roldan!"

"An image of Lady Roldan!" said Sour Plooms: "does she mean that she'll turn a saunt and be worshipped? they hae gawe and kittle she saunts on the list already."

"Whisht!" said Dumpling, "the stanes will be scant on Glengarnock crofts when they worship thee, Beckie."

Lady Roldan arose, went into her chamber, and speedily returned with brow, and bosom, and hands glittering with diamonds; she had adorned herself with jewels—the heirlooms of the house of Roldan. "It is meet," said she, "that I should for once take the state of my title and condition upon me: life is short, and we cannot too soon do our duty. I am lady of Roldan. He said that, who is to leave upper air so soon—he spoke truth at last."

Morison observed an unusual brightness in her eyes, and Jeanie Rabson thought that her voice was more hollow than usual. As she turned round she saw herself in the large mirrors and started, exclaiming, "Who is that?" then sighed and said, "See how daftlike jewels and gold make God's creatures."

Nanse Halberson now entered the apartment. "I was sorely laid on a sickbed," she said, "but I couldna keep awa in sic an hour as this: ye needna tell me—I ken a', I ken a'!" and she dropped suddenly down on a settee and hid her face in the palms of her hands.

"Oh, Morison," whispered Jeanie, "I doubt Nanse disna like this; but Godsake speak her fair! she can do uncannie things when she chooses. Rab Jamieson, o' Nethebarfeggan, as gude as blames her for his wife's taking up wi' the young portioner of Clogwhang, and Jenny Davison says—but she's a brazen cuttie—"

"And yere a fule!" exclaimed Nanse, "for minding the country's clavers."

"I tauld ye sae now," whispered Jeanie, "she's a fearful woman."

Nanse now rose up and said to Lady Roldan, "The hearse is come—but let it pause—another victim is required: Mary, remember that in your pride of heart—on the day when Morison came into the world—you wished a deep, deep wish to one who keeps a record of all rash things, that your hours might be numbered, and the grave gape for you should you consent to be Lady Roldan. Bid the mourners pause: another victim is required!"

"I dreaded something like this," said Jeanie, with a shudder, "when she entered the room and I saw her brow—it was as dark as tar."

The horses at this moment were put to the hearse; the wind came in sudden gusts and tossed the sweeping manes

and unshorn tails of the coal-black animals, and agitated the plumes of the hearse so, that they seemed about to be blown from their places.

Lady Roldan arose, looked on Nanse, and said, "Woman! why came you to tell me this? know I not that my moments are numbered; that with me the hand of time is on the closing hour? Did I not feel the finger of fate upon me the moment I called myself Lady Roldan!—but I would have done so had earth gaped to swallow, and heaven stooped to crush me. Could Mary Morison refuse his dying request, when his heart's blood flowed, and the parting soul hovered on his lips? Woman! a demon could not have refused him, and were it to do again, I should not pause, but do it!"

"You have done your duty, lady," said Nanse, with much emotion, and wiping her dropping eyes—"so have I mine—for there came a sough and a sound up my lonesome howe of a nook yestreen on the stroke o' twal: and I thought I heard the prancing o' horses, and saw the glimmer o' lights, and heard human tongues. And I sained mysel', and looked out of my window, and lo! and behold there were six riders wi' mourning cloaks, and they bore the body of a man dreeping wi' blude; and then followed, maist at touching distance, sax other riders bearing the body of a lady as white as lilies new born in the morning sun. And I heard a voice crying frae the ground, 'Room for Lord and Lady Roldan!'" All looked aghast at this, save the lady whom it most concerned.

"These," said Lady Roldan, "are but figures of the imagination, and words of the fancy; I have had a more direct warning. I dreamed yestreen I was dead, and that I went to Glengarnock kirkyard, and asked to lie down with my blessed father and mother. And I heard my mother's voice say, 'Let us take the erring creature in, there's room enough for us all;' and then my father said sternly: 'A harlot shall not lie in the bosom thou hast lain in, Sarah! let her go and lie down with her lord in the Roldan chapel—we are simple folks, and are not company for ladies.' And then I wept, and my mother said, 'Thy daughter's tears are wetting my bosom, let her in, alas! she has been but seven days a lady.' And then the ground gaped, and I started with affright, and found myself with the casement open, looking out on the Roldan lea, and as cold as I am now—feel."

"Thy hands are as clay, lady," said Jeanie, "come with me to thy chamber."

"My chamber, Jeanie, is the grave! the lights which shine on my sleep will be the stars of heaven; the music of birds will be heard in the grove by all ears save mine; the melody of the running stream shall not sooth me as it was wont, neither shall the flowers of the field open their bosoms, and diffuse their fragrance for me any more; my moments are summed, the ice of death is in my veins, the light of day is

growing dim in my eyes. What sound is that! Ay, I understand."

The sound to which she alluded was made by the removal of the body from the room of state to the hall; the coffin was of lead, and the strength not little, which took it down the long marble stairs.

"Morison, Lord Roldan," said Mary, laying her hand on her son's head, "I bless thee—thy life will be long, and thy name great in thy native land. In thy father's castle, remember thy mother's glen—the Elfin glen; thou and thy children will visit it, and pray in it, to be preserved pure and holy, and high souled! Is there snow in the air? how cold it is—there is mist too, for I see but dimly." She all but fainted where she stood, and was borne to her chamber by Jeanie Rabson and the attendants, among whom Sour Plooms and Dumpling were the most active, or at least the most noisy.

"Oh!" cried the former, "be gentle with our beloved lady, for she is the lady in meekness, in loveliness, and in piety, unpolluted with the poison of the woman of Rome! It is a pleasure and a pride to serve the like o' her—I could kiss the print of her shoe."

"And I," exclaimed Dumpling, "would become a Presbyterian to-morrow, could I find another like her in the land; she is sweet—all others are sour, she will be a wonder in heaven, a Presbyterian wonder!"

The burial-place of the Roldans was the Ladye Chapel. The situation, romantic at all times, was doubly beautiful now; for summer had lavished all its bloom on the ground, and its greenest lustre on the woods. Flowers, too, sprung from every joint in the masonry or rent in the walls; birds' nests were plentiful there in the season: it afforded shelter to all creatures with wings, save the crow and the hawk, which were shot, as ominous and foul. On the present occasion, other tenants than winged ones occupied the ground below and the walls above. Respect, curiosity, and affection, had brought the peasantry from far and near to witness the interment of Lord Roldan, and look at his son, to whose name every day brought increase of honour.

"No that I care the pitching of a quoit for the sight of him," said Jamie Gracie of Gateslap; "for I sat next him in the school, and ken weel what's in him. Morison was aye owre fairsaurond for me; but it's something to see a Papist lord laid in the mools, and hear words that naeboddy but ministers ken, mumbled owre him."

"Yere a hash, if ye dinna like Lord Morison!" exclaimed Tam Callan of the Vennelfoot. "I have seen him double ye up like the single caritch, for beating boys no half the size of yersel', and then learn ye your lesson to stop the

hulabalou that ye raised. I kenna how I'll contain myself when he comes."

The hearse which bore the body of Lord Roldan, with the mourners who accompanied it on horseback, now approached the chapel; men stood on the hills, sat on distant house-tops, and on the summits of the neighbouring trees. All was still: no one spoke above their breath, as soon as the procession began to move.

"Which is Lord Morison?" ran from lip to lip on the chapel top. "Which is Lord Morison?" exclaimed a rustic. "Are ye blind; ye may tell the step and glance of a Roldan frae a' other creatures of God. That's him; see, he looks up at the auld chapel: did ye ever see sic an ee? it's like that of the eagle."

"And that's Davie Gellock," whispered another. "If Lord Roldan made Davie, Davie was quits and helped to make him. A wee bird sang to me that, but for Davie's rough sense, his lordship wad hae been a peg or twa lower wi' Napoleon than he is; and a' fowk swear that but for Davie's strong arm, he wad been as cauld in Carswaddo linn as steel could hae made him. It's weel his part to do something for Davie—Davie did mickle for him."

The coffin was brought out of the hearse and borne into the chapel, and two priests in their vestments came forward to perform the burial service of the ancient church over the body. All took off their hats. But it was the will of fate, that naught was to be done wholly to the satisfaction of the audience.

"Deil's in the pride o' them, and the folly too," said a rustic, when he saw the coffin: "pride, by being laid up in lead like a stune of green tea; and folly, for how will the speerit get out of a leaden trough that's sowdered down as close as if it contained the plague?"

"Ye say weel, Ringan," said another, "but what's waur, thae carles wi' the mousty heads, and wide sark sleeves, and curious cloaks, on which the Harlot of the Seven Hills has wrought some of her Papist devices, gins to catch men's souls; what will they do now, answer me that? They will sing psalms, as if music wad be grateful to a dead man's lug; I wonder how the auld waas can forbear falling on them. Pray for the dead! I wish that prayers for the living wad avail; I'm sure mickle hae I prayed for world's gear and the furtherance of fortune, and I'm penniless still."

The people crowded round the coffin with awe and reverence; the dark earth full of crumbling bones lay about, with bits of skulls and shreds of coffins and decayed pieces of armour. The coffin was in the act of lowering, when all at once, and without the slightest intimation of approach, Lady Roldan burst in among the mourners. She had leaped from the castle window upon the back lawn, hurried down the pri-

vate path which led to the chapel and stood by the side of the grave, before she was missed from the castle. "Mother—mother!" said Morison, taking her by the hand, "this is no place for you—let me conduct you back—alas! you are too deeply moved. Oh! calm yourself." At this moment the first shovelful of earth was thrown upon the coffin lid. The sound was hollow and startling.

"There!" she said, "heard ye not that, my boy! There is a tongue in that grave which calls on me to follow—see, see! that was a hand which waved to me from the coffin; it was his hand; I would know it among a thousand!" The men ceased throwing in the earth, and stood gazing on Lady Roldan.

Morison knew not what to do; he saw that his mother's mind was wandering—that her whole frame was feverish and agitated—to remove her by force he had not the heart; to persuade her to retire was beyond his power—he stood miserable and irresolute.

"You are right," she said to the gravediggers; "hold your hands for a moment. There is more earth there than will be wanted. My father and my mother refused to take me into their narrow house—but here there is room enough!"

The sun edged suddenly out from a black cloud, which the whole morning had concealed his beams, and threw such a light on the scene as made many start.

"Now!" exclaimed Lady Roldan, "the guests are met. Heaven tells us the time. I am ready, my lord, I am ready! But there is too little light about the altar—how dark the church is—this ring pinches my finger. I told your lordship, when you forced it on, that it did not fit. Fy! my bridal dress has been soiled in the sewing. Jeanie Rabson, how happened this!—if you hurry me so fast I shall fall. What an uneven floor is this! there are bones of the dead among my feet. Now all is right. Lead me to the altar."

Lady Roldan made a sudden step forward; Morison barely hindered her from falling headlong into the grave; her attendants bore her out to the fresh air, in what they called a swoon—but it was the swoon of death.

The earth, the air, the sky; his father's body; priests and people, all ceremony, all observance were at that moment as nothing to Lord Roldan; he saw but his mother's body; he beheld but her dying looks; he heard but her parting words; the priest laid his hand on him, saying: "Abide, my son, and see the rites of God's church performed." He flung him rudely from him: he caught his mother fondly up in his arms; he ran with her to the rivulet bank; held her up to the sunny air, bathed her brow and temples in the stream, and watched her eyes and lips, and repeatedly placed his hand on her bosom to feel for what was fled and gone. "Death is here, Lord Roldan" said Maxwell, "and all my skill cannot bring life back for a moment."

"Death!" exclaimed Morison: "I have seen death in all shapes; but will you tell me that she who this moment spoke and acted and felt beside me is now the dust of the earth: I will give you the lands of Roldan to restore her again." And he dropped her hand in despair; felt for the hilt of his sword; groped at his waist where his pistols used to be—and then said in utter agony, "Life to me is so exquisitely bitter that I desire not to preserve it. Here she lies who lived for me—was unto me father and mother, brother and sister!" and he threw himself by her body, and seemed for a while insensible to all, but to her whose hands he held in his, and put to his lips, and clasped to his heart.

The wildest and rudest of the spectators were affected at this sight. Dominie Milligan, over whose fantastic dress Morison had kindly thrown a mourning cloak, wiped his eyes and said, "Fy, Lord Roldan, fy! were ye a man in France, and will you be a woman here? Have ye not read the New Testament, and believe ye not in God and in a future state? Rise! What is life here but a trial, and whiles a sore one? our best happiness is but a blink of an April sun, compared to the eternal sunshine of the hereafter. The flower which lies crushed 'neath our feet reads you a lesson: the bloom is broken; the beauty gone, and its fragrance fled; but every year as the season comes will it spring again, and bloom, and diffuse odour. It speaks of earth and heaven—need I say more to one such as Lord Roldan?" Morison arose at once from the ground. "Come hither," continued the dominie, "all ye who love what is lovely, and reverence worth in death. Here one lies bruised as a flower by the whirlwind; bear her softly home, and lay her where dropping eyne may look upon her." A dozen peasants came at the summons. "Here, spread that cloak," he said, "over her body, and bear her home on your hands by two and by two, and let the maidens gather flowers, and strew all the way over which beauty and virtue are borne. Forgive this, my lord; but I see you are too much moved to be wholly yourself." Lord Roldan wrung his hand, took his arm, and followed mournfully the body of his mother, nor regarded what was done in the chapel. The priests had their own way; for though some of the more stubborn Presbyterians came there to lift up what they called their testimony—which probably meant casting of stones—against idolatrous Papist sepulture, they rushed out at the doors—they dropped in dozens from the trees, and followed the body of Mary Morison.

All this took place in the presence of a thousand people, and deeply did the rudest show, in that hour of misery, their respect for the name of Lady Roldan, and the fame of her son. "Why should we heed how they put the wicked lord's clay in the cold earth?" said one, "it's as weel for our souls no to sanction the idolatrous mummeries with our presence—

but let us spread green boughs, and strew sweet-scented flowers in Mary's path; for oh! was she not lovely, as she sat like an angel in her lonesome glen, bringing up her boy-babe, in the teeth of mickle misery and shame—and see, is he not become an honour to his house, and a light to the whole land? And wha wad hae thought there was so much tenderness in John Milligan? I could hae laughed at his jay-pyot garments, but I canna fin' in my heart to do't after yon: with that meltingness he spake, and how gracefully he threw his mourning cloak owre the body—I maun augment his Candlemas bleeze for this." The cry reached the castle, and out poured its inhabitants, with Sour Plooms and Dump-ling at their head.

"I tauld ye aye," said the former, "that it wad be this way; when fire and water come together without steam, and hissing, and strife, then will Papist and Presbyterian mope and mell, and good come of it. Hech, sirs, but she makes a comely corse!"

"Had my counsel been taken," said Dumpling, "a' this sorrow wad hae been spared; I aye said to the Lady Winifred, catch madam of the Elfin glen, lock her up in the haunted chamber of the castle, gie her bread and water and a holy priest, and if between them they fail to make her fain to be a true Catholic, I'll consent to wed Lord Roldan myself. She's fair to look on, even in death—but it's a' spite that twa deaths come so close, yet its economical in the way of mournings."

Mary Morison was laid lifeless in that house of which she had been an hour before the living mistress; her son sat up all night beside the corpse; he would allow no one to touch her, and he held her hand so long in his till it became warm, and he half imagined that life was coming back. On the morrow he was removed almost by force: Davie Gellock took him in his arms and bore him into a neighbouring chamber, not a word spoke Davie till he placed him on a bed, when he wiped the tears from his eyes and said, "Oh, Morison, man! my heart has nae been sa sair since I bore ye wounded out of the hail storm of shot in that wae-fu' Italy. I canna speak to ye, but bid me do something for ye, only bid me do something to serve ye, and if I dinna do't, damme then! as the dear defunct Corsbane used to say."

Morison wrung his faithful adherent by the hand and whispered, "Be near me, David, be near me, don't leave me, don't leave me!"

"Leave ye, Morison!" said Davie, sobbing as if his heart was nigh the breaking; "Criffel shall leave the Solway side as soon!" And down he sat in a carved chair, fixed his eyes on the door like a sentinel, and remained silent and motionless as a statue.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oh, nature lavished on my love,
 Each charm and winning grace!
 It is a glad thing to sad eyes
 To look upon her face.

ALEXANDER MONTGOMERY.

THE events recorded in the last chapter left Lord Roldan and Lady Rose desolate and lone in the world, and brought them together so much, that they found solace to their hearts in interchange of mind, and in contemplating their own singular fortunes. At first their wish seemed to be to do honour as far as things of earth can confer it, on Lord and Lady Roldan, who both occupied one grave in the Ladye Chapel; the ancient ruin was purified of all weeds and cleared of all rubbish; some repairs were made, but so skilfully as not to be observed; the wild flowers peculiar to the spot were encouraged to grow, and Davie Gellock, who was seldom surprised into anything like rapture, declared that the spot was become quite a Rose of the Wilderness; and Nanse Halberson was of opinion that the lady spirit who on solemn occasions hovered around it lamenting its fallen state, need mourn no more, for the chapel was now lovely in its ruin, and worth a pilgrimage to behold.

The second object of their solicitude was the Elfin glen; nature had none so much for this romantic spot, that art had little more to do, but clap nature on the back, and commend her. They visited the garden—the flowers were flourishing according to the seasons, and all was neat and well ordered. The Elfin cavern seemed still under the care of tasteful hands—the little springlet sparkled clear; even the red-breasts and wrens which Mary was accustomed to feed and see flitching not undelighted around her, were there, nor did they shun the new guests, for they saw nothing to dread in their looks. The sight of all this was acceptable and consolatory to Morison: nor did he hear without emotion, that on Sunday mornings, by the time the sun was well up, groups of the peasants visited his mother's grave, and strewed it with flowers; while in the afternoons, on their way from church, grayheaded men would hold their hands towards the Elfin cottage amid its small clump of trees, and say, "There lived the pattern of all mothers."

The matters which engaged Morison's attention were not all of so grave and solemn a nature; he was waited on one morning by his faithful retainer Davie Gellock: the looks of

that worthy were swelling and important; and though he was in almost all things nothing backward, he seemed so on the present occasion, for after sundry hums and has, and strokings of his hat, Lord Roldan was obliged to say, "Well, Davie, my friend, what is it!—that ye have something to ask for, I know."

"The deil's in you, Morison—my lord, I should say—I dare say I'll be able to get my tongue about it in time—the deil's in you for finding out all things. I have a thing to ask, or may be twa—ye'll no be gaun to stay in Scotland, I jalousie?"

"Well, David, and suppose I should resolve not to abide here?"

"Ou ye see," replied the follower, "I wish ye wad decide ay or no; because ye maun ken if ye abide here, I'll be compelled I doubt to change my condition, and e'en wed a bit o' land wi' a woman attached to it; but if ye be for up sails and awa, why then I shall e'en let wedlock alane till a more convenient season. O' the twa, I wad prefer fighting."

Morison smiled as he answered, "David, who is the favoured lady now? has the heiress of Howeboddom lent a willing ear to your suit?"

"Suit!" exclaimed David, "if I didna suit her before, she wadna suit me now. Na, na, he would be a fool that wad risk being refused twice by a lass o' forty, faith! Na, na, my present love's a queen of another metal; but ye ken her well yersel', Morison, there's mony liars an' ye have na chapped her out o' her bower, as the ballad says, aftener than ance. And I maun tell ye that that circumstance is a merit in my een: an' the cunning slut has found it out too, for she aye dates everything this way: 'It just happened half a year after I refused Lord Roldan.'"

Lord Roldan looked on Davie, and laughed.

"The heiress of Fourmerkland is indeed cast in another mould than my own Jeanie Rabson; the latter would not scatter your gatherings, David, but the former will hold them together with fingers of steel; your gold will be as safe as if it were sunk like the red Comyns in Dalswinton pool, and the devil watching it in the guise of a fiery dragon."

"Ye delight me to hear ye say sae," replied Davie, "I will wed the queen instanter, as Grippie Armstrong said: she shall be my wife, or damme! as the dear defunct Dick Corbane expressed it; but that is in case that ye're gaun to abide here. Hout! ye're gaun to bide hane: there'll be grand gangings on abroad; they tell me our friend Napoleon has made himself dictator—what's that! something o' power, I'll warrant, for ye ken he had an ee that way; and they say he will be proclaimed emperor. Now ye see an that be the case, ye canna be made less than a marshal or a king; and what will become o' me then, if I hae hooked it on wi' a lass

wha keeps ewes on the braes of Fourmerkland. I canna rise with your rising, I reckon!"

Morison smiled inwardly at the worldly views of his follower, and replied, "I perilled my blood for freedom: but the freedom which France won for herself she now denies to other nations, and is about to proclaim that all who desire to live must bow themselves down to the military idol which she has set up. France has changed her principles: I have not changed mine; and obeying mine, I am readier to draw my sword against her than for her."

"I dinna understand ye at a'," said Davie; "but I ken this, that we had some braw fighting baith in France and Italy, and did mony grand things, whether for freedom or against it; and I for my own peculiar turned an honest penny; never to speak o' the gifts ye gied me, and what I had frae that born devil Lannes, and Murat too. I wish that Napoleon's present had been in coined metal; I kenna what to make of a green jewel—it's only fit for the locks of a mermaid."

At that moment the Lady Rose entered, and gave honest Davie a smile of recognition.

"If you had come here a minute sooner, Rose," said Morison, "you would have heard a speech upon love and war from our friend David, which would have stirred your heart like the mingled notes of the lute and the trumpet."

"Dinna mind him, Lady Rose," said David, imploringly, "that's just the way he does wi' a' things. I hae seen him make a hale bivouac dance with their guns in their hands, and laugh till they were fit to fa' down, though they were holing with hunger, just wi' his queer way of hitting human nature atween jest and earnest."

"Ay, but this is no laughing matter, Rose," said Lord Roldan; "Cupid has got hold of one hand, and Mars has a hold of the other, and our honest friend there is like to be pulled to pieces between them; the winged god stands on the hill of Fourmerkland, and the armed god in the camp of the army of England."

"Army of England!" exclaimed Davie, "no, damme then! as the defunct Corsbane expressed it; I beg to put in a declinator, as Grippie Armstrong says: they'll look wi' clear een that will find me fighting against this little isle. I see I maun een draw in my seat and sit down at the Fourmerkland: d'ye ken what the price of lambs was at the last Lock-erbie fair, and how woo' gangs in the market? I find I'll comprehend things in time."

"David," said Lord Roldan, "I must enable you as bridegroom to sit down softly; the bride will expect more with you than a couple of stalwart arms and an honest heart. There is the farm of Dargavel; it lies as lovingly in the embrace of Fourmerkland, as the heiress will lie in thine; it is your inheritance so long as it is mine to bestow."

"I must bestow something too," said the Lady Rose; "but if I give it to the bridegroom the bride will be jealous: here is a ring, with a diamond set richly in it; it will look well when the heiress mixes the ewe-milk curd with her fingers; they are very white ones, are they David?"

"Oo as white in my imagination as the fingers which Morison used to dream of when he was a lyric poet. Lady, did ye never hear the sang he made about some one he met with at harvest kirk, ane of birth as weel as beauty; he put stars, twin stars, nae less in her een, and gae them a light which influenced the fortunes of mankind. He made the very floor feel bewitched wi' the music of her feet—the waving of her hand caused a hundred hearts to leap into love—the very cat that sat watching a mouse forgot to put out its claw as it looked at her—and the sunny tresses which flooded her milk-white shoulders, waved witchcraft as they moved in the dance. Allow me to put up that stray tress of your ladyship's, à-la-Morison, as we say on the Rhine." Without waiting for one word or look of consent, Davie fixed in the young lady's temple tresses a gem, the gift of Napoleon, and bowing, said, "I tauld Morison it was only fit for the locks of a mermaid—ye maun wear it, lady, till I can catch ane."

Rose blushed as she looked at Morison, and turning to a mirror, saw an emerald in her hair, encompassed with diamonds of great value; she turned to thank David: he was already distant; he had hurried away the moment he accomplished this feat, which he ever after reckoned among his most daring deeds. "I passed, and no hindmost either, at the bridge of Lodi," he was wont to say, "and I made love to an heiress that used to hound the tykes in me when a boy, and ca' me Duddie Davie, but baith set na my heart into half the flutter, as putting that green stane among the love locks of our bonnie Lady Rose."

While Morison and Rose sat talking over this interview with the worthy David; of his courage and kindness of heart, and the poetic spirit which now and then glimmered out in his actions; Dominie Milligan approached. He came, as perhaps mortal never came before; he swung his arms to and fro like ill-regulated pendulums; hurried forward one moment like a man possessed, or stood stock still; then, getting into motion again, uttered his feelings in Greek, corrected them in Latin, and finally adjusted them in English. "The dominie's in love too," said Morison; "I have seen him perplexed, with dark lines in Pindar, and with difficult problems in Newton—he finds woman a darker chapter than either, I fear." As he said this, the dominie entered.

"I had hope," said he, "of finding your honour alone, but the Lady Rose is one of the discreet maidens, therefore, she need not retire: nay, I hope to have the profit of her understanding, in a matter that hath perplexed me exceedingly."

"A man of your learning, Mr. Milligan," answered Rose, "ought to be perplexed with nothing; with the wisdom of ancient and modern times at command, what can puzzle or perplex you?"

"You talk not now, Rose, like one of the discreet maidens," said Morison, "has not my follower brought home a sample of eastern lore, which has confounded my old preceptor; Davie has drank at real Egyptian and Cælo-Syrian springs; the dominie has tasted of the fountain after being shaken and muddled in the carriage. I have no doubt he has come to consult me in this learned matter."

"Deed have I no," said the dominie, briskly, "I hae encountered and dumbfoundered Davie; he came upon me when I was ensconced in my wonted Saturday-at-e'en chair at Howeboddum, and had the presumption to challenge me afore Miss Jeanie Rabson and James her brother, aent the true pronunciation of the Hebrew and the Syriac. I maan do the lad the justice to say, that as far as sound wad gang, he gaured it do, and hurled against me battalion after battalion of strange words, that were na words ava, but matters of man's invention—it is enough that he couldna stand against the true thing; he was unable to resist the quotations from the fathers with which my memory is stored; and so he broke and ran, and took owre the hill to Fourmerkland—the gilded will pass for the solid there: his counterfeit Syriac will be current with the heiress of Fourmerkland; she cannot detect the thing by the faith that is in her, like our ain Miss Jeanie Rabson."

"So you have discomfited Davie," said Morison, "and gained a march or two in the good graces of the heiress—Jeanie was always fond of learned and grave persons: but Davie could not be serious!"

"Deed was he, Morison," said John Milligan; "he saw how far ben my learning took me at Howeboddum: he envied me, sir; he saw that the home was a bieldy one, and that Miss Jean was virtuous and good, and sae he thought if he could but overcome me he would have the whole to himself. Maybe it would hae been as weel had I permitted him to vanquish me; it has brought me into an awfu' dilemma:" with that the dominie wiped the starting sweat from his temples and added; "but I did it that true learning might be honoured in the land and to abash presumption. Oh, Lady Rose, this is a hard trial! I thought the sermon of the pomegranate a sore discomfiture, but that was endurable to this; do I look like mysel, d'ye no think my voice is hollow! I looked at my shadow in Roldan burn and I scarcely kenned it. Jeanie Rabson's dog wad bark at me if it saw me now."

"But Jeanie Rabson herself would be very glad to see you, dominie," said the Lady Rose.

"Say ye sae, lady, ay! ay! nae doubt, for Miss Jean is, as

ye say, partial to learning; but that Assyrian whelp; that ass of Mesopotamia; that Egyptian pyramid of presumption, Davie, has spread it about that I forget my station of teacher of virtue to the youth of this land: that Miss Jean lends a too willing ear to what he calls my classic blandishments, and that I ought to gang nae mair back to Howeboddum, save in the character of bridegroom. Oh, wha wad have thought it would have come to this; Howeboddum's become to me as a haven of rest, and to gang nae mair back—I doubt I'll no can stand it. Oh, Lady Rose, it's a fearfu' bide!"

The Lady Rose nigh laughed outright, "Well, but, dominie," she said, "this seems no such serious matter; marry the heiress: Howeboddum is a warm downsitting."

"Marry the heiress!" exclaimed the dominie, "I'm no sure that the heiress wad marry me. It's a question that thrice in my life I hae had on the top of my tongue to ask: first, when through God's blessing I was chosen over five competitors master of this district school; secondly, when in consequence of the bright parts and vivid example of Morison, dear lad! the other bairns acquitted themselves sae weel, that their parents gave me a splendid Candlemas bleeze; and, thirdly, on Saturday at e'en nae further gane, when I took up the testimony of sacred love against that eastern ass that brays sae loud, David le Gellock, as he calls himself; but I had nae the heart to speak it in braid Scots for fear Miss Jean wad laugh at me. I could have done't in Greek, but she wadna have understood me. Oh, this is an awfu' pass, Lady Rose, I canna gang back to Howeboddum lest the name of that innocent young thing, Miss Jean, should suffer; and what shall I do wi' mysel' if I dinna gang back, I am sure I cannot say!"

"Why, my dear dominie," said Morison, "it is clear that you must ask the hand of the heiress, my ain Jeanie, as I ever eall her: then, should she refuse, you can continue your visits to her brother James, you understand; and should she consent you will then visit Howeboddum on account of your wife. The matter is very plain." "So it is," said the dominie, "and I shall forthwith make the attempt. Lady Rose, my heart is lightened: if I find Miss Jean among the lambs I shall be emboldened to speak: these pastoral things open the heart: if I canna do't now, I'll try and shoot owre till the spring when the bud breaks on the timmer, and the gowans seem to be a shower o' snaw on the plain, and the song of the bird is heard frae the half-lang tree. If Miss Jean can say no, then, she will never say ay for me;" and saying so, the dominie departed.

Morison turned to the Lady Rose, and said, "You seem thoughtful, sister; but let not your heart be disturbed with fears about the conjugal comforts of either Davie or the dominie. Davie is not serious with the heiress of the hill,

and the heiress of the plain is not serious with the dominie ; they are two originals, and were I so disposed, I might have a month's mirth out of them just now."

"I am, indeed, thoughtful, Morison," replied Rose ; "I, alas ! see you are not at rest in your own mind ; you are not satisfied with your situation ; else why those walks on the wild seashore when the lightning is in the air ! else why those midnight paces which are heard in your chamber. Oh, my brother !"

"Brother !" exclaimed Lord Roldan, "I tell you, Rose, my heart refuses to own you for a sister, though my lips repeat the word. I wish that you were the lowliest of all Scotland's maidens, so you were not a drop's blood to me. If to love you be no sin—it is a glory."

"Hush ! Morison," said Rose, interrupting him, "these are wild, strange words. Oh seek not to bestow language on feelings which, spoken, must separate two desolate orphans. Are you not content to be my brother ? What name can be nobler ? to be the sister of Morison, Lord Roldan, the peer of princes, and the equal of conquerors, is an honour in which I rejoice. If I am not your sister, what right have I here ? On this castle I have no claim ; sunder that tie and you see me no more," and she arose and looked on him as if she said—"I look into your soul."

"Rose," replied Lord Roldan, "I have told you that in my heart I cannot call you sister. What says your own ? Is there not a certain distance—a colder air—a more measured behaviour on your part than what arise from the undoubting and trusting mind of a sister ? While your lips call me a brother, your heart disowns me as such."

"It is no ill-measured feeling of our own, Morison," answered Rose. "No aspirations which selfishness nourishes. No dreams which passion indulges in, that can settle this awful question. Oh Morison, Morison ! why did you press this awful topic on me ? why not allow me to dream out my life in the belief that you are my brother ?"

"It is because I dislike all mystery," said Lord Roldan ; "it is because your own heart cannot acknowledge the name you claim ; it is because I feel—that I must solve this or die."

The Lady Rose was deeply agitated. "And am I," she answered, "to fling away on a vain surmise—to cast behind me, because of a mystery, the holy, the sacred, the protecting name of sister ! Bring me the proof, the sure proof, that I am not what your father called me—that I am not what I must believe myself till then to be, and I shall say brother no more—my voice shall no longer be heard in the halls of Roldan."

"Stay but a minute, lady—stay but a moment," said Morison, rushing out and returning with the casket given him by the Lily of the Desert in his hand. He placed it on the table.

"Where got you that, Morison?" inquired Rose, anxiously.

"I got it from one who told me not to look into it till I was in the deepest distress—till I wished for death; that hour is come." He touched the spring; a rich aromatic smell was diffused over the room. The casket contained nothing, save one or two long glittering hairs. Morison laid them over the back of his hand. "I see," said he, "the hand of him who slew my father has been here: he is gone to his account; and the mystery which I hoped it might solve is still unsolved:" and he closed the casket, and tossed it from him.

"Morison," said Rose, "trust in God—be resigned—be—" She burst into tears, retired with agitated steps to her own chamber, and asked for strength from above to enable her to sustain her own heart, which she found trembling and unsteady. She then passed her own conduct in review, and said, "Alas! did he not speak the truth when he said that my air, my behaviour, the measured distance which I keep, are not those of a sister, and that my own heart refused to own the title. Oh! I hoped to have lived and died at his side. I had a dream that we should be examples of brotherly and sisterly happiness—that our thoughts through life would be one—our ways one, and our graves one; but, alas! that is not to be. God pity and support me."

It was now the twilight: the air was hot and calm: stars twinkled here and there in the sky: the breeze came landward, and murmured among the cliffs and caverns. Lord Roldan took out his favourite Arab horse, mounted, and saying a word or two as he patted his neck, the noble animal bounded away, and in a few minutes carried him to a little lonely house, a mile and more from any human habitation; flowers crawled up the whitened front; a neat garden with fruit trees enclosed it; a spring dropped its waters from a rock into a basin nigh the door, and a feeble light glimmered in the window.

Morison sprang down, lifted the latch, and going up to an armchair, where, amid the uncertain light sat a human figure, said, "Agnes Halberson, speak to me. Is Rose Roldan my sister? Let me have no evasion: this is not the first time I have asked that question, and received a mystical answer. It must be yea or nay now."

She started from her seat, seized the lamp, held it to his face, and muttered, "Ay, ay, the demon that rules his house reigns in his brow now! Madman!" she exclaimed, "am I a god, to unravel what is hidden; comest thou to me with the evil spirit of thy race rejoicing in thine eyes, to know what may never, alas! be known! The grave has closed the lips which could have spoken the word of destiny. Await with patience till God, in his own good time and way, lifts

the dark curtain from before thee. I cannot solve thy question—go.”

“Then I know what can solve it,” replied Lord Roldan, “since neither God nor man, nor demon nor woman, seem disposed to pity me.” And as he said this he sprang upon his horse.

“Stop, I command you!” exclaimed Nanse—she looked to the west, and she looked to the east, then quitted hold of his bridle, saying, “Go—God has work to do for thee yet; yonder blessed star tells me that thy line is not now to be extinguished. Go—fulfil thy destiny.” Fire sprang into the air from the horse’s feet: a gallop of ten minutes brought him to the side of the Solway; the tide was filling all the bay: the wind from the south urged the tide onward in long foaming lines, and all the air was moist with the wafted spray. Morison looked a moment on the scene before him, and saying to his horse, “On, on,” urged him upon the advancing swell. He burst through the first line of tide, spurning the foam and sand high into the air: the second line, at a few bounds distance, was running six feet deep abreast. The noble animal breasted through that likewise; then glanced wildly around, as if in quest of some enemy, for whom all this danger was dared. Morison exclaimed, “Noble creature, thou art right!” and leaping down threw the bridle on his neck, and turning his head landward, said, “Away—begone.” The horse, true to his teaching, rushed back towards the shore, and the rider was left to seek the destruction which he appeared to court, in a place where it might be found without seeking.

The light of the stars, feeble as it had hitherto been, was suddenly quenched; a cloud covered sea and shore as with a mantle, while liquid fire spouted out by fits, showing the hillocked waves and the caverned coast. “Though heaven and earth should unite,” murmured Morison, “to drive me from my course, they will fail—welcome, darkness, for light is not for me!” He was met by another deep bar and borne upon it like foam; his white plume with a small diamond clasp which had floated amid many a strife was swept ashore; while the horse on which he had so often charged climbed a bank against which the waves beat tumultuously, looked on the vast expanse of agitated water and neighed, as if conscious of the fate of its master.

“Oh, what a sight!” exclaimed Nickie Neevison: the fiend, in the semblance of a black courser bearing Lord Roldan, came past me like a fire-flax, and plunged into the abyss, as if he had been a water kelpie—but the auld enemy has deceived himself; I accept this dovelike feather as a token that he is saved, and is safe in Abraham’s bosom.”

“Or what say you to Sarah’s, woman?” said the rough voice of Davie Gellock.

"Oh Lord!" exclaimed Nickie, "but I'm glad to see you; a voice that's human is gladsome to my ear—but His right arm be about us, there's the Evil One! he has a mane like a meteor—there's flame in his nostrils. Davie, are ye as mad as your master?"

"Mad!" exclaimed Davie, "it's Lord Roldan's favourite horse—Murad, my man, where's your master? Gane to sea, damme! as the defunct Corsbane was wont to say; then he maun be in yon gallant barge, that comes breasting the broo like a bonnie wild swan."

"He's in the howe o' the Solway!" exclaimed Nickie; "did I no tell you that the fiend carried him into the flood and drowned him—did I no hear his death shriek?—it winna be out o' my lugs as lang I live."

While Lord Roldan was amid the agitated waves, the barge to which Davie alluded swept suddenly round the headland: and, as the cloud had partly passed away, and the stars of one half of the sky were shining brightly out, the whole bay with all its shore and bordering castles and villages became visible to the mariners. One of those on board was of the gentler sex: her dress was not of this land, but appeared of an eastern cut; to this was added a bonnet with a plume from the wing of the golden eagle, a richly chased dagger, supported by a brace of pistols, shone in her belt, over which flowed a white cymar which concealed her form no more than the glass conceals the flower which it is intended to nourish.

"Help, here!" exclaimed the Lily of the Desert, for it was no other, "help! leap in! do you dread that aught can hasten fate?" she pointed as she spoke to Morison, now tossed insensible on the top of the wave as the idle sea weed it was bearing to the beach.

A dozen men plunged into the tide at her command, and Morison was borne on deck; he gasped, and ejected sea brine from mouth and nostrils; he spread out his hands, then closed them again, and half turned himself—life and consciousness were returning.

"God is great!" said she, gazing on him; "it was foretold that water would endanger but not destroy him; his destiny is fulfilling. Behold, my people, how great God is! I had wellnigh ruined, but have now happily saved that noble youth. Look on him well. Know ye not the young hero who was our guest for a season in the Rose of the Wilderness?"

Her attendants looking on, exclaimed briefly, "God is great!" then took him up in their arms, bore him tenderly to the beach, and placed him on a couch formed of shawls and mantles.

The cry had already arisen that Lord Roldan was drowned in the bay; it made the circuit of Glengarnock with the wings of a swallow. Some took up Nickie Neevison's tale,

that Satan in the guise of a huge black horse had committed this atrocity; others, less imaginative, averred there was naught wonderful in a wild horse running awa wi' a wild young man into a wilder sea; while a third class exclaimed, "Morison, puir fallow, couldna help it; for it was spaed to him by witch Nanse, that he wad die some kind o' death sooner or later, and now here's the fulfilment on't." These opinions were uttered by the peasants as they hastened to the bay.

There was another opinion, but it was entertained only by one, and that was the Lady Rose. To say she ran is too little; to say she flew is too much; but at a pace something between both she hurried to the seaside, and throwing herself on the bosom of Morison, murmured, "I will be anything to thee. Oh, to think that I have done this!" The arm of Morison faintly clasped her, and his lips feebly returned the shower of kisses which she poured on his mouth.

"God is great!" said the Lily of the Desert; "the thing that is, is; and the thing that must be, must be. Are they not a comely pair, my people! I knew all this would come to pass in the fulness of time, for God had ordained it."

The Lady Rose, as these words were uttered, turned her eyes on the stranger; the blood rushed violently to her brow and temples; her lips and teeth parted with surprise, seemed unwilling to close, and she half raised her hands, as if about to take the other in her arms. "Behold her!" exclaimed the Lady Lilius, "nature is moving her; her heart yearns for her mother, though one dearer than her mother has just now been in her bosom. Rose Roldan—nay, turn not from that youth at thy side, for it is assuredly written that he is thine own." Lord Roldan, to whom sense and life were fast returning, gazed on the people, who, at a gentle distance, crowded around him; at the now subsiding waves of the bay, from which he had, he knew not how, been taken; and with eager surprise at the lady who had rescued him. "I see, my son," she said, "that thou art still unrecovered from thy strife with that overmastering element; but I can speak the charm which will restore thee." As she said this, she took the hand of the Lady Rose, and said, "Rose, thy noble father, Lord Thomas, is dead and gone. Thy mother empowers thee to give this hand where thou hast already given thy heart." A white and trembling hand was placed in that of Lord Roldan.

"I receive it," exclaimed he, "as joyously as it is wondrously bestowed! I receive it in this presence as the noblest, the loveliest boon that Heaven could give me. Lady, well may you say that God is great; that shall be my motto, and in the fear and reverence of God shall I maintain my household."

A shout of applause from the assembled crowd told how welcome those sentiments were to their ears.

"He's a marvellous youth, this son of Mary Morison," said an old dame tottering over a staff; "the reverence of God will be a new thing in the castle of Roldan; where they have never feared angel, black nor white."

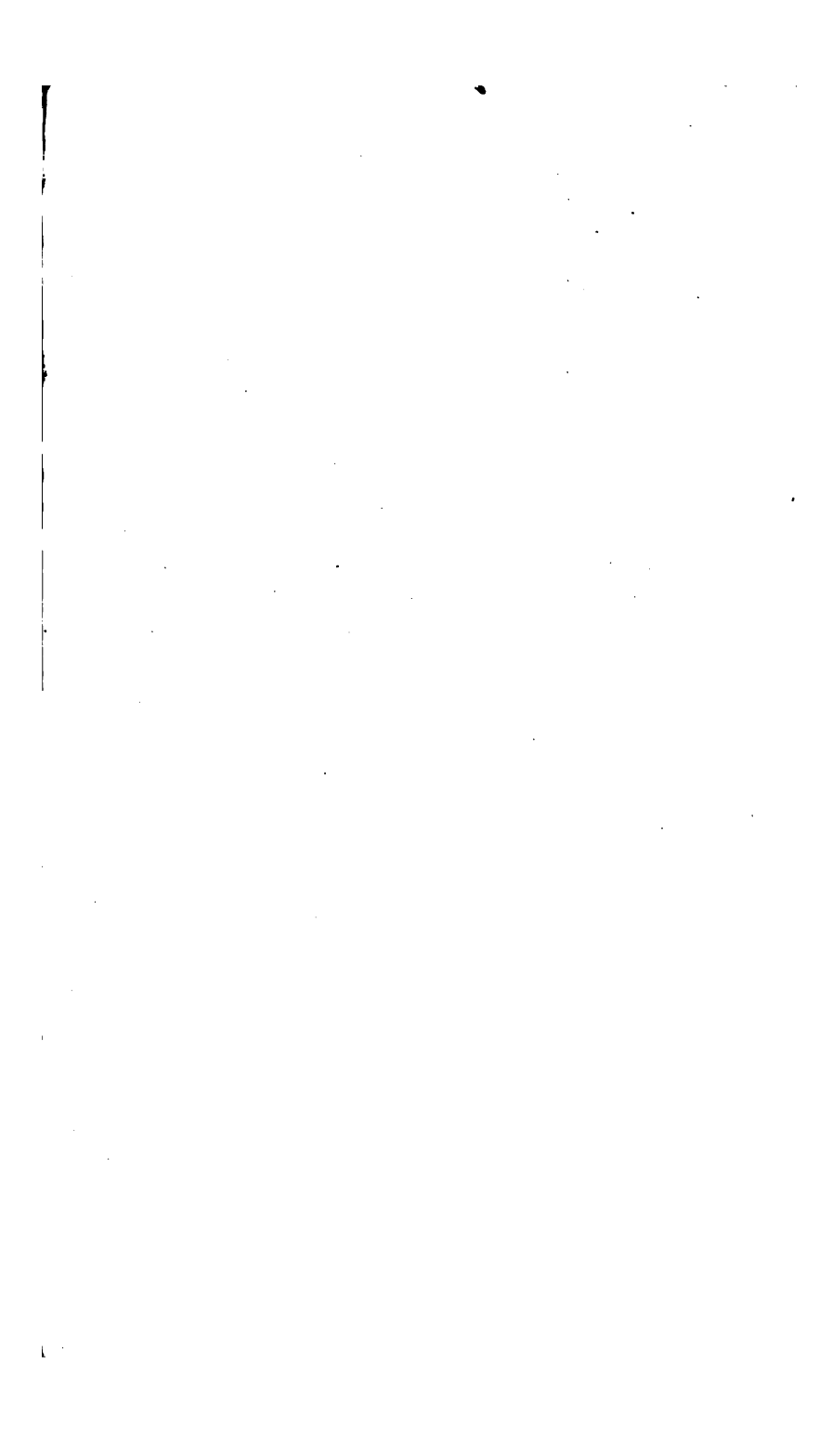
The gates of Roldan Tower flew open like a bird's wings to receive its brood, when Lord Roldan, and Rose, and Lady Liliass, with sundry children of the desert, approached the walls.

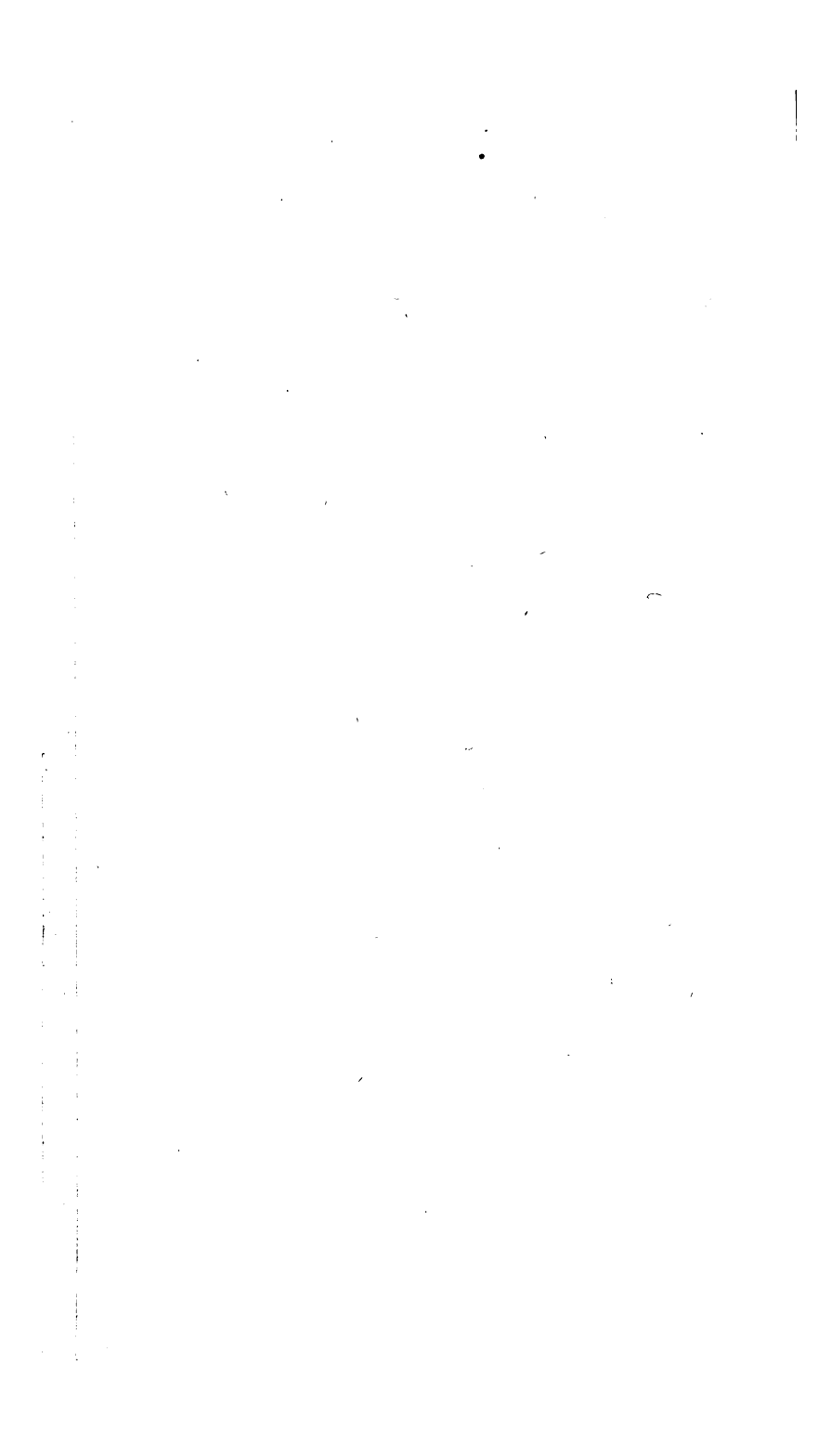
The banner of the house was spread to the wind from the topmost tower; lights streamed from every window; the tables were spread, at which no one was forbidden to sit, and wine was poured out with an abundance unknown in the castle since the restoration of the Stuarts. Davie took upon himself an increase of dignity; the heiress looked on the dominie, and declared that the visible joy and happiness in the looks of Morison and his cousin, had induce the hardest hearted to soften and get married; while she of the Fourmerkland said she had no objection to change her condition, for the sake of her dear Davie, if he would consent to be married at Belton, as on that day she had slighted the suit of Lord Roldan.

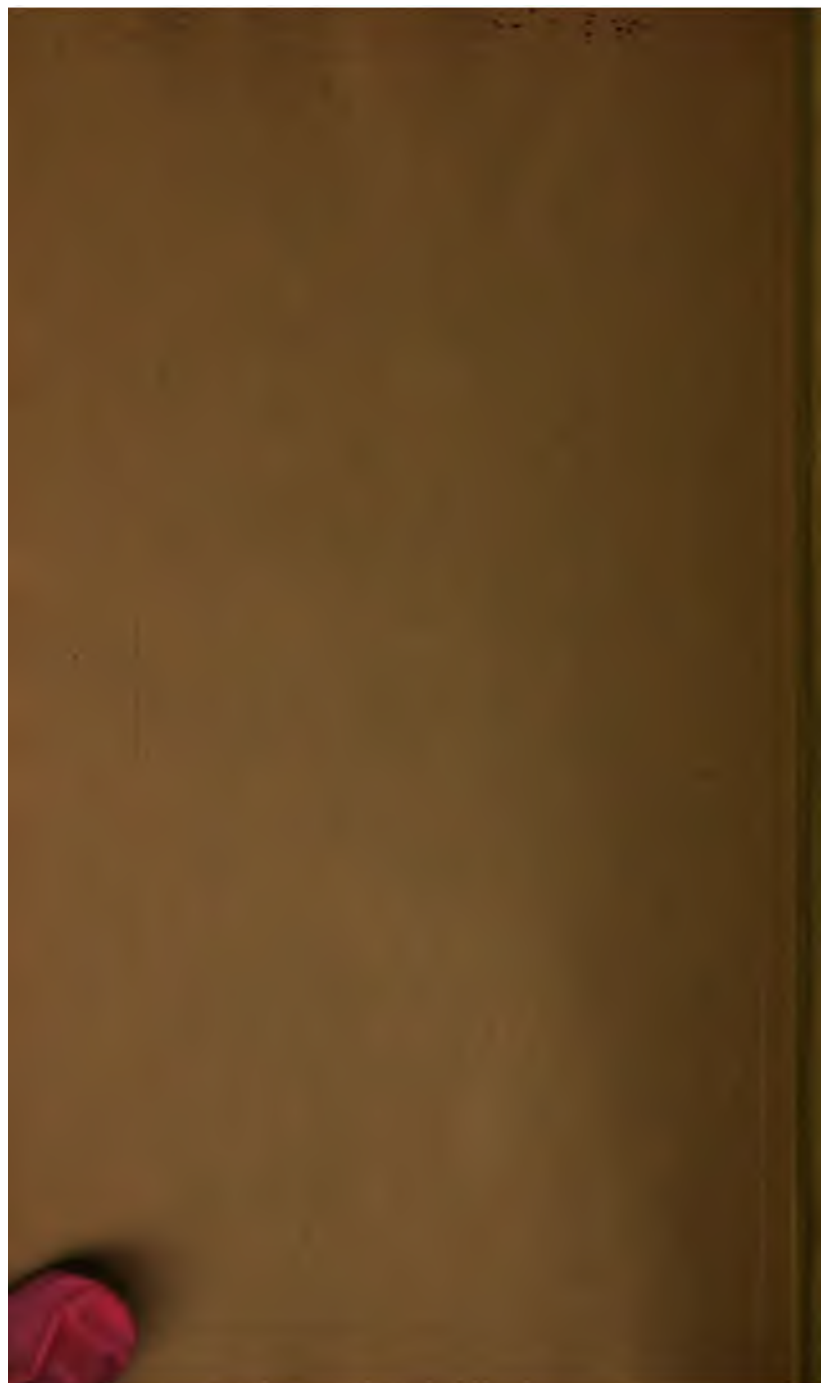
The mind of the Lady Liliass, when the first excitement subsided, became less exalted. She put on more modest attire; she saw less clearly into futurity; she lost the skill of prophesying; the vision of the white horse and the Holy One that descended from heaven was seen no more; and she completed her relapse into sober Christianity by accompanying Morison and her daughter to the kirk of Glengarnock, where they were married by the minister, who, in the first chapter of this true but strange history, rebuked Mary Morison with so much Christian gentleness. Returning home, the Lady Liliass said, "On my way from the East I came through France, and thy friend, the emperor of that and other lands, spoke of General Roldan as brave men speak of the brave. He sent thee this, my son, and the empress sent thee this, my daughter." The gift of Josephine—a necklace of diamonds—was worthy of the largeness of her spirit; that of Napoleon was the baton of a marshal of France. Lord Roldan grasped it in his right hand; his eye kindled; he stretched it in imagination over a line of victorious fields, from the Rhine to the Borysthenes; he looked at Lady Rose, and laid the emblem of war and ambition down—never more to lift it.

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